



BASIS OF FRONT OFFICE

Students Handbook

Class-XI



CENTRAL BOARD OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

Shiksha Kendra, 2, Community Centre, Preet Vihar, Delhi-110092, INDIA



Basis of Front Office

STUDENTS HANDBOOK

Class XI



CENTRAL BOARD OF SECONDARY EDUCATION
Shiksha Kendra, 2, Community Centre, Preet Vihar, Delhi - 110092, INDIA

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भारत का संविधान

उद्देशिका

हम, भारत के लोग, भारत को एक सम्पूर्ण 'प्रभुत्व-संपन्न समाजवादी पंथनिरपेक्ष लोकतंत्रात्मक गणराज्य बनाने के लिए, तथा उसके समस्त नागरिकों को:

सामाजिक, आर्थिक और राजनैतिक न्याय,
विचार, अभिव्यक्ति, विश्वास, धर्म
और उपासना की स्वतंत्रता,
प्रतिष्ठा और अवसर की समता
प्राप्त कराने के लिए
तथा उन सब में व्यक्ति की गरिमा

²और राष्ट्र की एकता और अखंडता
सुनिश्चित करने वाली बंधुता बढ़ाने के लिए

दृढ़संकल्प होकर अपनी इस संविधान सभा में आज तारीख 26 नवम्बर, 1949 ई० को एतद्वारा इस संविधान को अंगीकृत, अधिनियमित और आत्मार्पित करते हैं।

1. संविधान (बयालीसवां संशोधन) अधिनियम, 1976 की धारा 2 द्वारा (3.1.1977) से "प्रभुत्व-संपन्न लोकतंत्रात्मक गणराज्य" के स्थान पर प्रतिस्थापित।
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भाग 4 क

मूल कर्तव्य

51 क. मूल कर्तव्य - भारत के प्रत्येक नागरिक का यह कर्तव्य होगा कि वह -

- (क) संविधान का पालन करे और उसके आदर्शों, संस्थाओं, राष्ट्रध्वज और राष्ट्रगान का आदर करे;
- (ख) स्वतंत्रता के लिए हमारे राष्ट्रीय आंदोलन को प्रेरित करने वाले उच्च आदर्शों को हृदय में संजोए रखे और उनका पालन करे;
- (ग) भारत की प्रभुता, एकता और अखंडता की रक्षा करे और उसे अक्षुण्ण रखे;
- (घ) देश की रक्षा करे और आह्वान किए जाने पर राष्ट्र की सेवा करे;
- (ङ) भारत के सभी लोगों में समरसता और समान भ्रातृत्व की भावना का निर्माण करे जो धर्म, भाषा और प्रदेश या वर्ग पर आधारित सभी भेदभाव से परे हों, ऐसी प्रथाओं का त्याग करे जो स्त्रियों के सम्मान के विरुद्ध हैं;
- (च) हमारी सामासिक संस्कृति की गौरवशाली परंपरा का महत्त्व समझे और उसका परिरक्षण करे;
- (छ) प्राकृतिक पर्यावरण की जिसके अंतर्गत वन, झील, नदी, और वन्य जीव हैं, रक्षा करे और उसका संवर्धन करे तथा प्राणिमात्र के प्रति दयाभाव रखे;
- (ज) वैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोण, मानववाद और ज्ञानार्जन तथा सुधार की भावना का विकास करे;
- (झ) सार्वजनिक संपत्ति को सुरक्षित रखे और हिंसा से दूर रहे;
- (ञ) व्यक्तिगत और सामूहिक गतिविधियों के सभी क्षेत्रों में उत्कर्ष की ओर बढ़ने का सतत प्रयास करे जिससे राष्ट्र निरंतर बढ़ते हुए प्रयत्न और उपलब्धि की नई उंचाइयों को छू ले;
- ¹(ट) यदि माता-पिता या संरक्षक हैं, छह वर्ष से चौदह वर्ष तक की आयु वाले अपने, यथास्थिति, बालक या प्रतिपाल्य के लिये शिक्षा के अवसर प्रदान करे।

1. संविधान (छयासीवां संशोधन) अधिनियम, 2002 द्वारा प्रतिस्थापित।

THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

PREAMBLE

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a ¹**SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC** and to secure to all its citizens :

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all

FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the² unity and integrity of the Nation;

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949, do **HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.**

1. Subs, by the Constitution (Forty-Second Amendment) Act. 1976, sec. 2, for "Sovereign Democratic Republic" (w.e.f. 3.1.1977)
2. Subs, by the Constitution (Forty-Second Amendment) Act. 1976, sec. 2, for "unity of the Nation" (w.e.f. 3.1.1977)

THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

Chapter IV A

FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES

ARTICLE 51A

Fundamental Duties - It shall be the duty of every citizen of India-

- (a) to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem;
- (b) to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom;
- (c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India;
- (d) to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so;
- (e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;
- (f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture;
- (g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers, wild life and to have compassion for living creatures;
- (h) to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform;
- (i) to safeguard public property and to abjure violence;
- (j) to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement;
- ¹(k) to provide opportunities for education to his/her child or, as the case may be, ward between age of 6 and 14 years.

1. Subs, by the Constitution (Eighty-Sixth Amendment) Act. 2002.

Preface

In an increasingly globalized world and the changing paradigm of urbanized living the demand for Hospitality and Tourism has increased manifold the world over. In this ever expanding sector, it has become essential to provide competency based vocational Education. Taking cue from this need, a new course on Front Office Management is being launched that will help students to either join the industry after class XII or they can pursue higher Education in this field.

The attempt of CBSE to introduce Students Handbook on Basis of Front Office for class XI tries to equip the students with the knowledge about front office, hotel organization and it functioning, staff hierarchy and organization structure of a hotel, types of hotel room, meal plans and basis of charging, duties and responsibilities of front office personnel, safety and security, reservation and co-ordination of front office with the other departments.

It has been a deliberate effort to keep the language used in this students handbook as simple as possible. Necessary pictorial illustrations and formats have been included to help the students to understand the concepts without any difficulty.

Practicing professionals from the field of Hospitality and Tourism comprised the team of authors for this book. The Board thankfully acknowledges their contribution in completing the book in record time. I hope this book will serve as a useful resource in this subject.

The Board is grateful to the members of the Committee of Course for their advice, guidance and total commitment towards development of this course. We are indeed indebted to these academic advisors who have lent us the benefit of their rich and insightful experience. I would like to appreciate Vocational Education Cell, CBSE for coordinating and successfully completing this work.

Comments and suggestions are welcome for further improvement of the Book.

Vineet Joshi, IAS
Chairman, CBSE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page No.
1-10

UNIT 1: HOTEL ORGANIZATION

- 1.0 Unit Overview and Description
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 The Organization of a Hotel
- 1.3 Departments that make a Hotel
- 1.4 Staff Hierarchy and Organization Structure of Hotel
- 1.5 Organizing Hotel Departments on the Basis of Revenue
- 1.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.7 Practical Activities

UNIT 2: HOTEL ROOMS

- 2.0 Unit Overview and Description
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Classification of Guest Rooms
- 2.3 Types of Hotel Rooms
- 2.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.5 Practical Activities

11-17

UNIT 3: MEAL PLANS and BASIS of CHARGING

- 3.0 Unit Overview and Description
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Meal Plans
- 3.3 Comparing the Meal Plans
- 3.4 Basis of Charging
- 3.5 Tariff Card
- 3.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.7 Practical Activities

18-26

UNIT 4: FRONT OFFICE

- 4.0 Unit Overview and Description
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Staffing the Front Office
- 4.3 Staff Hierarchy chart of a Large and Medium Sized Hotel
- 4.4 Sections of Front Office Department
- 4.5 Functional Organization of Front Office Department
- 4.6 Equipment Used in Front Office
- 4.7 Duties and Responsibilities of Front Office Personnel
- 4.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.9 Practical Activities

27-47

| | |
|---|---------------|
| UNIT 5: LOBBY and its LAYOUT | 48-52 |
| 5.0 Unit Overview and Description | |
| 5.1 Introduction | |
| 5.2 Lobby Layout | |
| 5.3 Let Us Sum Up | |
| 5.4 Practical Activities | |
| UNIT 6: CO-ORDINATION of FRONT OFFICE with OTHER DEPARTMENTS | 53-62 |
| 6.0 Unit Overview and Description | |
| 6.1 Introduction | |
| 6.2 Advantages of Coordination Among Departments | |
| 6.3 Co-ordination of Front Office with Different Departments in the Hotel | |
| 6.4 Let Us Sum Up | |
| 6.5 Practical Activities | |
| UNIT 7: SAFETY and SECURITY | 63-78 |
| 7.0 Unit Overview and Description | |
| 7.1 Introduction | |
| 7.2 Developing the Security Programme | |
| 7.3 Security for Guests | |
| 7.4 Security of Hotels | |
| 7.5 Emergency Procedures | |
| 7.6 Communication and Records | |
| 7.7 Let Us Sum Up | |
| 7.8 Practical Activities | |
| UNIT 8: RESERVATION | 79-98 |
| 8.0 Unit Overview and Description | |
| 8.1 Introduction | |
| 8.2 Importance of Reservation | |
| 8.3 Modes and Sources of Reservation | |
| 8.4 Types of Reservation | |
| 8.5 Systems of Reservation | |
| 8.6 Process of Reservation | |
| 8.7 Group Reservation | |
| 8.8 Cancellation and Revision | |
| 8.9 Selective Overbooking | |
| 8.10 Reservation Reports | |
| 8.11 Let Us Sum Up | |
| 8.12 Practical Activities | |
| UNIT 9: ASSIGNMENTS | 99-102 |

General Instructions to the Students

1. It is expected that the student will be able to understand the basis of functioning of Front Office Department in Hotels.
2. The students should try to gain as much practical knowledge as possible by completing the practical assignments suggested at the end of the units.
3. The students should focus on the Front Office Staff Organization, Various Sections in Front Office, Duties and Responsibility of Front Office Staff explained in Unit 4. Also Students should understand the need and Importance of Coordination of Front Office Staff with other Departments.
4. Each student must go through the relevant points on the reservation system followed in Hotels and what to do while dealing with different situations involving the Guests and Hotel Security. All doubts and queries of the students should be clearly addressed and explained. Such questions and answers should be noted down in pocket note books which shall be the basis of writing more elaborate Reports. Collaborative group activities should be encouraged among students for proper understanding.
5. Proper caution regarding safety is mandatory during carrying out of practical projects. All safety requirements must be followed strictly.

Learning Objectives

| S.NO | Unit/Chapter Name | Theory+ Practical | Key Learning Objectives |
|------|--|-------------------|---|
| 1 | Hotel organization | 18 Hrs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the Organization of a hotel 2. List down the Departments and Staff hierarchy chart of a Hotel 3. Identify Departmental organization on the basis of revenue |
| 2 | Hotel Rooms | 9 Hrs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Classify and differentiate the Types of Guest Rooms |
| 3 | Meal plans & Basis of charging | 9 Hrs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the Meal Plans, Comparative meal plan chart & Basis of charging |
| 4 | Front Office | 23 Hrs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the Staff organisation, Functional organization & Sections of Front Office department 2. Prepare and Understand the Staff Hierarchy chart of a large and medium sized hotel 3. List the Equipment used and Duties and responsibilities of front office personnel |
| 5 | Lobby and its layout | 12 Hrs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the Lobby Layout |
| 6 | Co-ordination of Front Office with other Departments | 19 Hrs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List the Advantages of coordination among departments 2. Explain about the Importance of Co-ordination of Front office with different departments in the hotel |
| 7 | Safety and Security | 10 Hrs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the need of Developing the Security Program for Security for guests & Hotels 2. Explain the Emergency Procedures, importance of Communication during emergency and importance of Records keeping |
| 8 | Reservation | 30 Hrs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Importance, Modes, Types, Systems & Process of reservation 2. Group Reservation 3. Understand the procedure of Cancellation, Revision & Selective Overbooking 4. List the different Reservation Reports prepared in Hotels |
| 9 | Assignments | 10 Hrs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assignments related to The Topics from Unit 1 to 8 |

UNIT 1

Hotel Organization

Contents

- 1.0 Unit Overview and Description
 - ❖ Overview
 - ❖ Knowledge and Skill Outcomes
 - ❖ Resource Material
 - ❖ Learning Outcomes
 - ❖ Assessment Plan
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 The Organization of a Hotel
- 1.3 Departments that make a Hotel
- 1.4 Staff Hierarchy and Organization Structure of Hotel
- 1.5 Organizing Hotel Departments on the Basis of Revenue
- 1.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.7 Practical Activities

1.0 Unit Overview and Description

Overview:

This unit will provide the student information about the definition of a hotel, different departments in the hotel and staff hierarchy structure of a hotel.

Knowledge and Skill Outcomes:

- ❖ Definition of a Hotel
- ❖ Understand the organization structure of a hotel
- ❖ Develop awareness about different departments in the hotel and their respective roles
- ❖ Understand the staff hierarchy structure of a hotel

Resource Material:

Hotel Front Office Operations & Management : Jatashankar R. Tiwari
Front Office Operations : Colin Dix, Chris Baird
Front Office Management : Sushil Kumar Bhatnagar
Front Office Management & Operations : Sudhir Andrews

Front Office Operations & Management : Rakesh Puri

Check-in Check-Out Managing Hotel Operations : Gary K. Vallen, Jerome J. Vallen

Principles of Hotel Front-Office Operations : Sue Baker, Jeremy Huyton, Pam Bradley

Learning Outcomes:

| Unit 1: Hotel Organization | Outcomes |
|--|---|
| 1.1 Introduction | General Overview |
| 1.2 The Organization of a Hotel | You will be able to define a Hotel and understand the organization of a hotel |
| 1.3 Departments that make a Hotel | You will be able to ❖ List different departments in a hotel ❖ Understand the role of each department in a hotel |
| 1.4 Staff Hierarchy and Organization Structure of Hotel | You will be able to prepare staff hierarchy chart in a large hotel and a small hotel respectively. |
| 1.5 Organizing Hotel Departments on the Basis of Revenue | Student will be able to classify departments in a hotel on the basis of revenue |

Assessment Plan: (For the Teachers)

| Unit | Topic | Assessment Method | Time Plan | Remarks |
|------|--|------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| 1.1 | Introduction | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 1.2 | The Organization of a Hotel | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 1.3 | Departments that Make a Hotel | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 1.4 | Staff Hierarchy and Organization Structure of Hotel | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 1.5 | Organizing Hotel Departments on the Basis of Revenue | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |

1.1 Introduction

A hotel or an inn is defined by the British Law as a 'place where a bonafide traveller can receive food and shelter, provided he is in a position to pay for it and is in a fit condition to be received'.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines hospitality as the 'reception and entertainment of guests, visitors or strangers with liberality and goodwill'. Therefore, the hospitality industry can be defined as the collection of businesses providing accommodation and/or food and beverage to people who are away from home.

A hotel may also be defined as a commercial establishment whose primary business is providing lodging facilities for the general public, and which furnishes one or more of the following services: food and beverage, housekeeping, concierge, laundry, health club etc.



Review Question

Q. 1 Define the word Hotel.

1.2 The Organization of a Hotel

The hotel clients (called guests in the hospitality industry parlance) receive a wide variety of services and facilities from the hotel. To carry out all the functions effectively and efficiently, the hotel should have a well-organized structure. Such a structure has the following advantages:

- ❖ It facilitates managerial action.
- ❖ It encourages and improves efficiency.
- ❖ It makes communication easier, faster, and more effective.
- ❖ It ensures the optimal use of resources.
- ❖ It stimulates creativity and adherence to conformity.
- ❖ It creates job satisfaction in employees, thus motivating them to excel.
- ❖ It leads to quality services, nurturing brand loyalty in guests, which would ensure the growth of business.

Review Question

Q. 1 What are the advantages of well organized Hotel ?

1.3 Departments that make a Hotel

As an outsider when you look at a hotel, the operation appears to be pretty simple, selling of rooms and your favourite food and beverage. But, actually, hotel is a highly complex operation where several departments function and interact to create a home away from home.

Hotel as a functional unit comprises of several departments. The major departments of hotel are as under:

- ❖ **Front Office:** This department performs various functions like reservation, reception, registration, room assignment, and settlement of bills of a resident guest.
- ❖ **Housekeeping:** The housekeeping department is responsible for the cleanliness, maintenance, and aesthetic upkeep of rooms, public areas, back areas, and surroundings in a hotel.
- ❖ **Food and Beverage Service:** This department looks after the service of food and drinks to guests.
- ❖ **Kitchen:** All the food and beverages that are served to the hotel guest is prepared in kitchen.
- ❖ **Engineering and Maintenance:** It looks after the maintenance of all the equipments, furniture and fixture installed in a hotel.
- ❖ **Accounts:** This department maintains all the financial transactions.
- ❖ **Security:** The security department of a hotel is responsible for the overall security of the hotel building, in-house guests, visitors, day users, and employees of the hotel, and also their belongings.
- ❖ **H R Department:** Human Resource department is responsible for the acquisition, utilization, training, and development of the human resources of the hotel.
- ❖ **Sales and Marketing:** The responsibility of increasing the sales of the hotel's products and services is the major task of the department.
- ❖ **Purchase:** The purchase department is responsible for procuring the inventories of all departments of a hotel.

Review Questions

- Q.1. Choose the correct answer:
- (i) In a hotel there is
(a) Food (b) Accommodation (c) Beverages (d) All of the above
 - (ii) Recruitment process is conducted by the following department in the hotel
(a) Sales and marketing (b) Front Office (c) Maintenance (d) HR Department
 - (iii) A hotel organization helps in
(a) Guest satisfaction (b) Communication (c) Co-ordination (d) All of the above

Q. 2. Match the following:

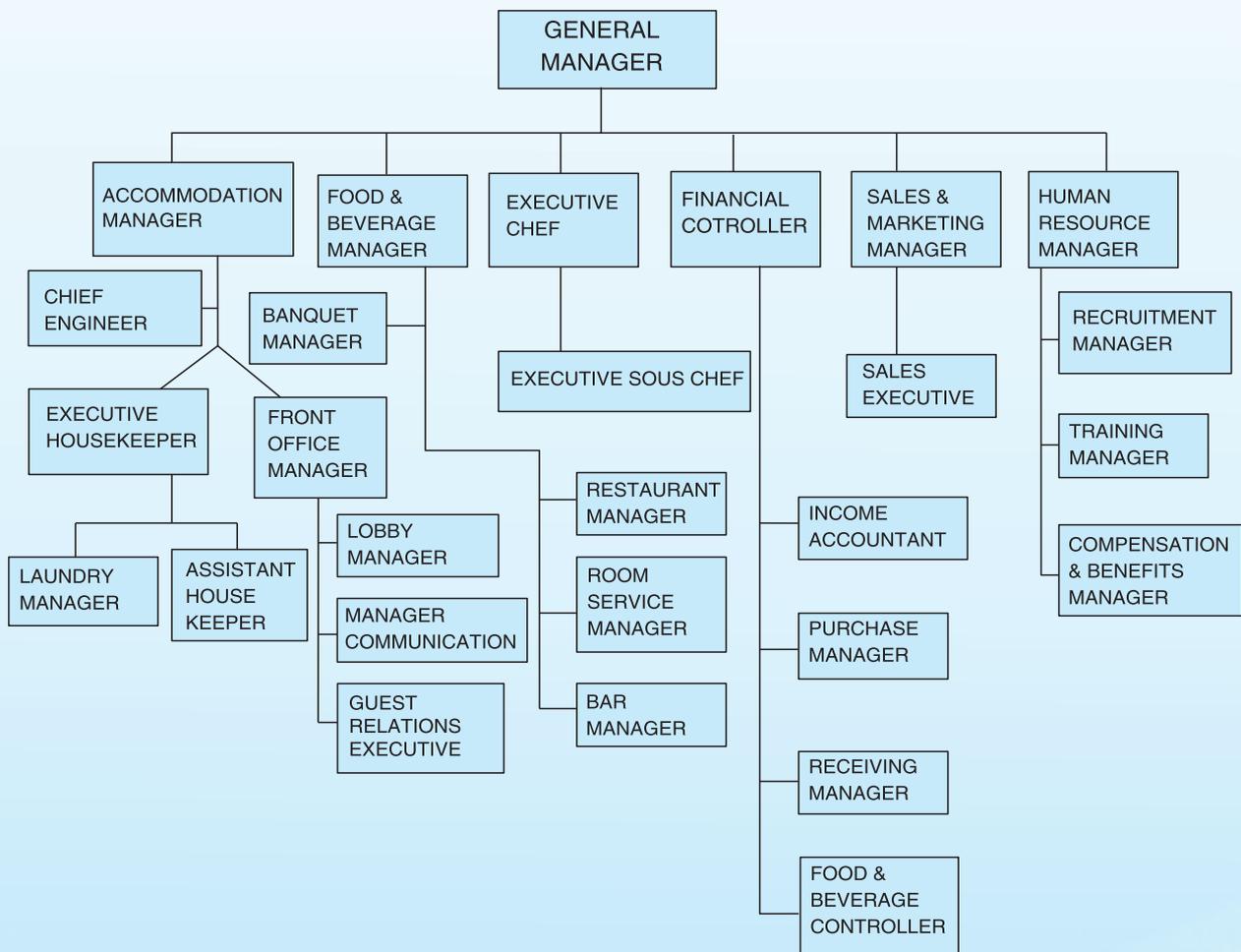
- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Hotel | a. Food and Beverage |
| 2. Maintenance | b. Manager |
| 3. Purchase | c. Engineering |
| 4. Motivating | d. Commercial Establishment |
| 5. Banquets | e. Procurement |

Q. 3. Answer the following questions:

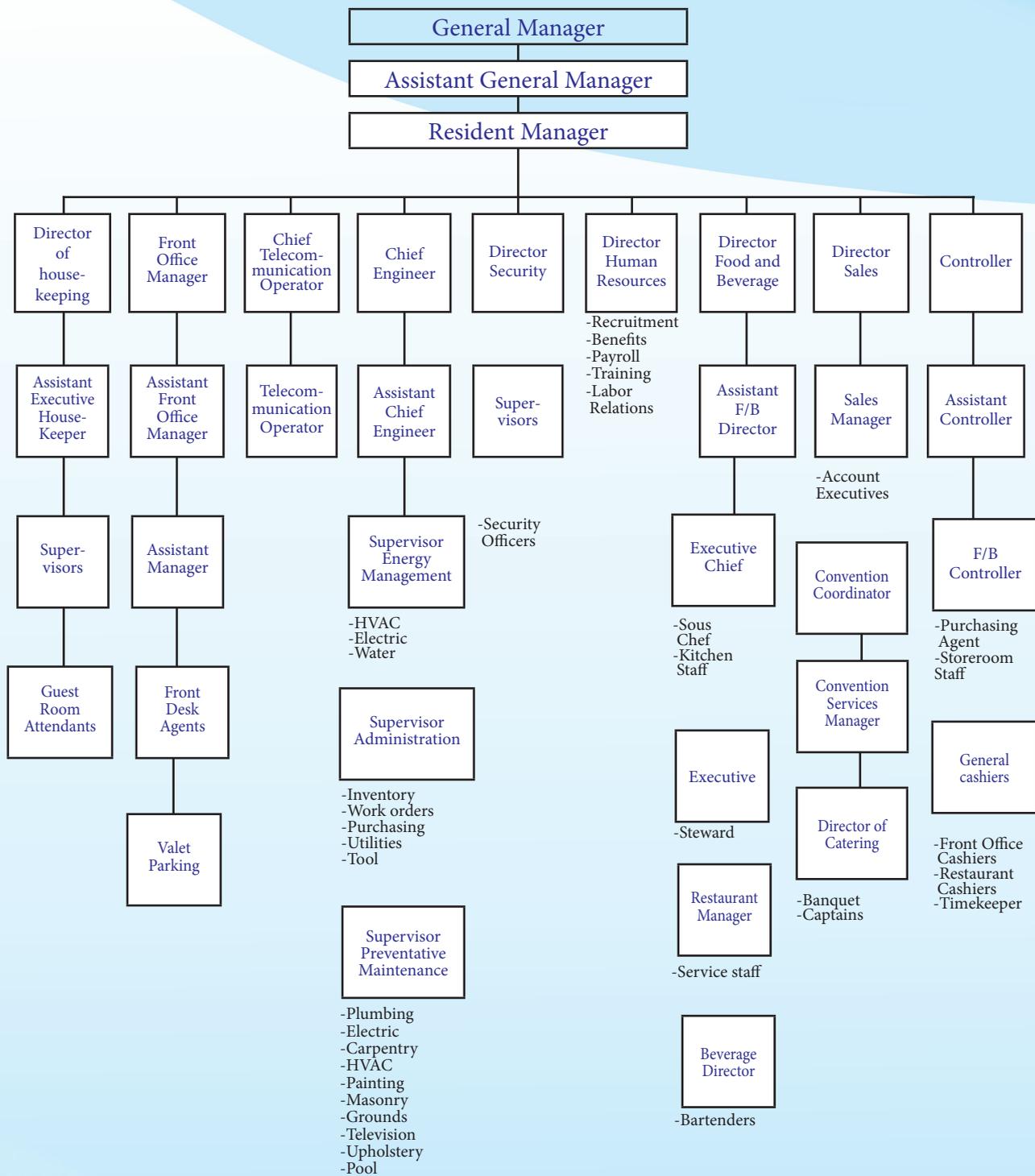
- Q. 1. Define Hotel.
 Q. 2. List and briefly explain the different departments in a hotel.
 Q. 3. List the advantages of organizational structure in a hotel.

1.4 Staff Hierarchy and Organization Structure of Hotel

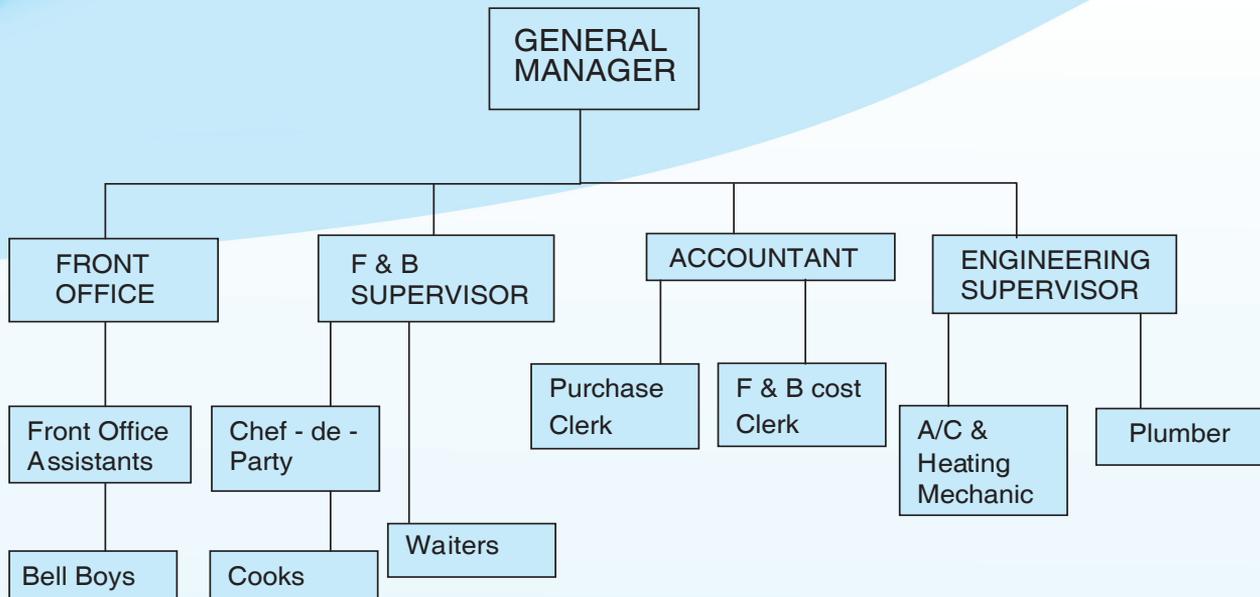
1.4.A : Organization Structure of a Large Hotel Management



1.4.B : Staff Hierarchy Chart of a Large Hotel



1.4.C : Organization Structure of a Small Hotel



Review Question

Q. 1 Draw the Organization structure of a small Hotel.

1.5 Organizing Hotel Departments on the Basis of Revenue

On the basis of Revenue there are main three types of departments in a hotel.

- Operating and Revenue Producing Department.
- Operating and Non - Revenue Producing Department.
- Non- operating and Revenue Producing Department.

a) Operating and Revenue Producing Department

- ❖ **Major Revenue Producing Department:** There are two departments which produce major revenue or more revenue than other departments - F & B Department & Rooms.
- ❖ **Minor Revenue Producing Department:** These departments produce revenue in minor amount.
 - ✓ Business center
 - ✓ Telephone
 - ✓ Health Club
 - ✓ Laundry

B) Operating and Non - Revenue Producing Departments

Under this there are those departments which are non- operated by hotel but produce revenue on the basis of rental contract. There are some examples.

- ✓ Sales and Marketing
- ✓ H R D

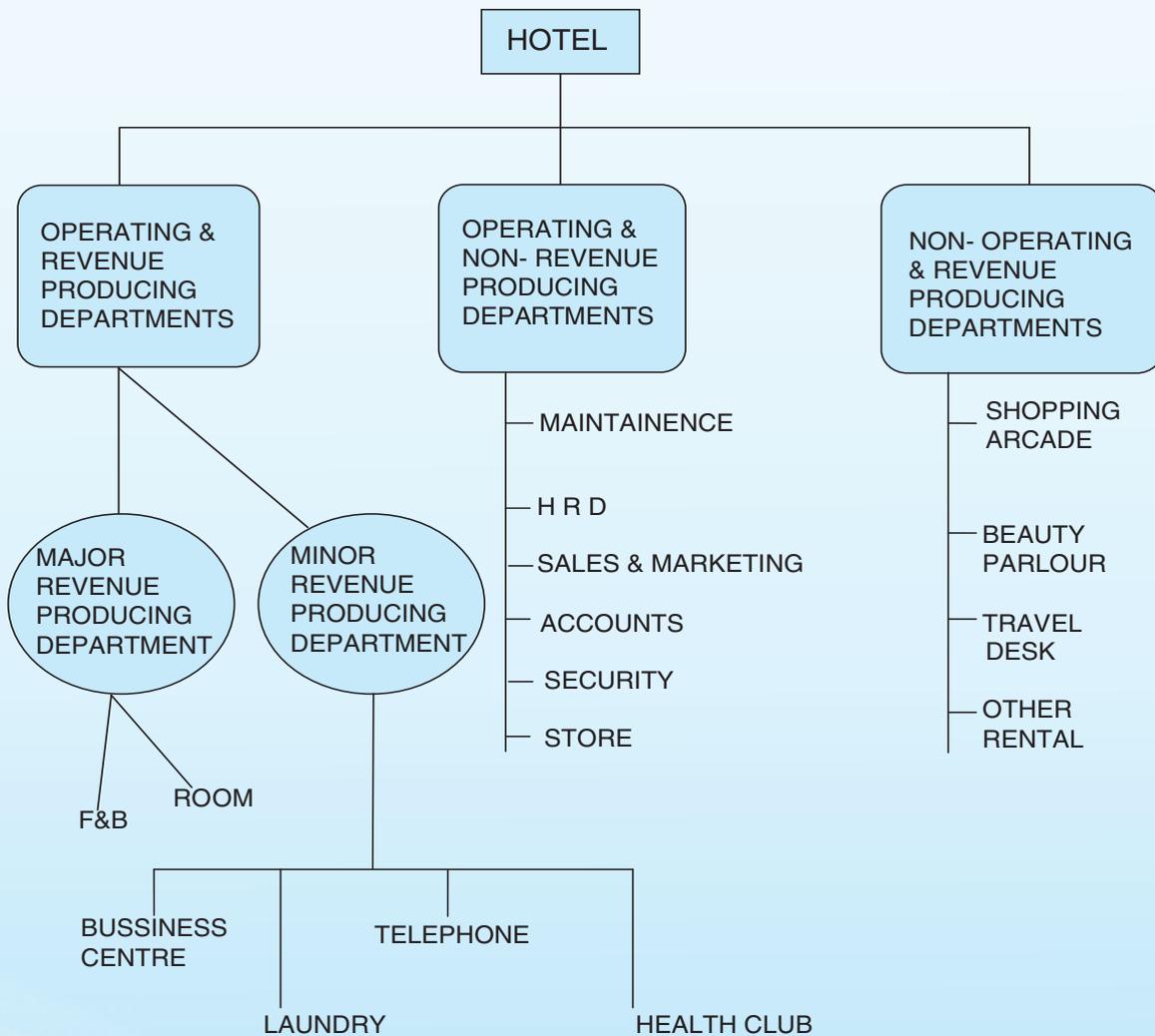
- ✓ Accounts
- ✓ Store and Receiving
- ✓ Security
- ✓ Maintenance

C) Non - Operating and Revenue Producing Departments

Under it there are those departments which are non- operated by hotel but produce revenue on the basis of rental contract. There are some examples –

- ✓ Shopping Arcade
- ✓ Other Rental Income
- ✓ Travel Desk
- ✓ Beauty Parlour

Departmental Organization Chart on the Basis of Revenue



Review Questions

Q. 1. Fill in the blanks:

- (a) _____ and _____ are the two major revenue producing departments in a hotel.
- (b) Front office and _____ are a part of rooms division.
- (c) Executive _____ is the head of the department for kitchen department.
- (d) Laundry is a _____ revenue producing department.

Q. 2. Answer the following:

- Q. 1. Draw Staff Organization chart of a large hotel.
- Q. 2. Compare the Organization Structure of a large and small hotel.
- Q. 3. Explain the Departmental Organization of a hotel on the basis of revenue.
- Q. 4. Discuss the concept of Non-operating and revenue producing departments.

1.6 Let us sum up:

Hotels regardless of size are organized by functions that include General Hotel Management, Front Office, House keeping, Food Production, F & B Service, Accounts, Engineering, HRD, Sales and Marketing, Human Resource Department, etc. All these departments work independently but in close co-ordination with each other to run a professional hotel.

Staff hierarchy chart of hotels vary from one property to another on the basis of organization policy and on the basis of the size of operation. In modern times, hotels have a lot of emphasis on multi-tasking which has resulted in one person doing the job of different lateral levels depending upon the requirement of the time.

Departments in a hotel may also be organized on the basis of their revenue contribution to the hotel. Rooms and Food & Beverage are considered as major revenue producing departments of the hotel. Hotels also have minor revenue producing department and non revenue producing departments.

1.7 Practical Activities

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Activity I: | Students to write on a paper their experience of visiting a hotel and a restaurant. They should discuss the difference they found in the product and services of the two. |
| Activity II: | Draw the staff hierarchy of a large hotel and present it to the class in a team of four students. |
| Activity III: | Draw the Management organization chart of a large hotel and present it to the class in a team of four students. |
| Activity IV: | Draw the departmental organization chart on the basis of revenue and present it in the class. |
| Activity V: | Discuss in the class room about the staff positions which may be eliminated in a medium size hotel and a small size hotel respectively. |

Activity VI: Discuss in the class room the advantages and disadvantages of multitasking by staff members in a hotel. Assume that you are the Front office manager of a hotel, from your perspective, what are the advantages and disadvantages of working in a large hotel with specialized positions in comparison to a small hotel where many positions are combined into one position.

Worksheet

Activity VII: Students to classify the following departments on the basis of revenue and write in the column.

| Department | Classification |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| ❖ Front Office | ❖ |
| ❖ Engineering & Maintenance | ❖ |
| ❖ Kitchen | ❖ |
| ❖ Shopping Arcade | ❖ |
| ❖ Food & Beverage Service | ❖ |
| ❖ Accounts | ❖ |
| ❖ Human Resource | ❖ |
| ❖ Sales & Marketing | ❖ |
| ❖ Purchase | ❖ |
| ❖ Travel Desk | ❖ |
| ❖ Business Center | ❖ |

UNIT 2

Hotel Rooms

Contents

- 2.0 Unit Overview and Description
 - ❖ Overview
 - ❖ Knowledge and Skill Outcomes
 - ❖ Resource Material
 - ❖ Learning Outcomes
 - ❖ Assessment Plan
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Classification of Guest Rooms
- 2.3 Types of Hotel Rooms
- 2.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.5 Practical Activities

2.0 Unit Overview and Description

Overview:

This unit will provide the student information about the basis of classifying rooms in a hotel, different types of hotel rooms and their features.

Knowledge and Skill Outcomes:

- ❖ Basis of classifying hotel rooms
- ❖ Different types of rooms in accommodation industry
- ❖ Identification features of different types of rooms

Resource Material:

Hotel Front Office Operations & Management : Jatashankar R. Tiwari
 Front Office Operations : Colin Dix, Chris Baird
 Front Office Management : Sushil Kumar Bhatnagar
 Front Office Management & Operations : Sudhir Andrews
 Front Office Operations & Management : Rakesh Puri
 Check-in Check-Out Managing Hotel Operations : Gary K. Vallen, Jerome J. Vallen
 Principles of Hotel Front-Office Operations : Sue Baker, Jeremy Huyton, Pam Bradley

Learning Outcomes:

| Unit 2: Hotel Rooms | Outcomes |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 2.1 Introduction | General Overview |
| 2.2 Classification of Guest Rooms | You will be able to understand the basis of classifying rooms in hotels |
| 2.3 Types of Hotel Rooms | You will be able to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ List different types of hotel rooms ❖ Differentiate among hotel rooms ❖ Will be able to rationalize the need for a specific type of room in a hotel |

Assessment Plan: (For the Teachers)

| Unit | Topic | Assessment Method | Time Plan | Remarks |
|------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| 2.1 | Introduction | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 2.2 | Classification of Guest Rooms | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 2.3 | Types of Hotel Rooms | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |

2.1 Introduction

The accommodation product does not just consist of a guest room - single or double, but also the additional facilities and services, which are applicable to that room. For example, does the room have a sea view? Is there mini-bar? Are there in-house movies? Can a guest dial direct from the room? Is there room service? Can the guest have access to the Internet? All these services, facilities and amenities may be included in the accommodation product of a hotel.

Since the accommodation product normally cannot be examined before purchase, guests are reliant upon the front office staff to describe the product to them accurately. It is, therefore, particularly important for the front office staff to have full knowledge of what is included in the accommodation package of a hotel.

Review Question

Q. 1 Why is it important for the front office staff to have full knowledge of what is included in the accommodation package of a hotel.

2.2 Classification of Guest Rooms

To cater to the different needs of their customers, hotels usually provide a variety of accommodation. In other words, a hotel offers different types of guest-rooms for sale.

Hotel guest-rooms can be classified in a number of ways depending on the following:

- ❖ According to the number or size of beds in the room

- ❖ The room size, the decor and the view
- ❖ Special accommodation such as the executive floor for business people, non smoking rooms, and presidential suites for VIPs

Review Question

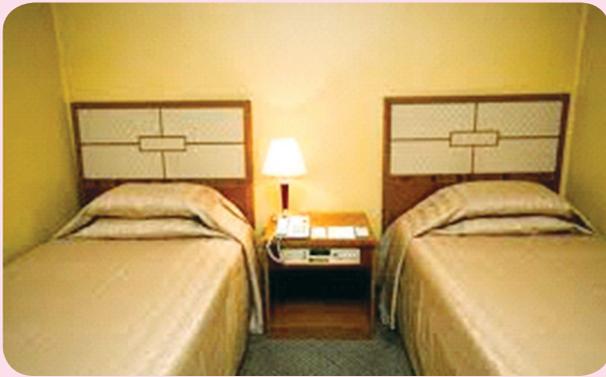
Q. 1 What are the number of ways Hotel Guest-Rooms can be classified ?

2.3 Types of Hotel Rooms

Some of the commonly found rooms in accommodation industry are listed as below:

- ❖ **Single Room:** It is the room which provides single occupancy. This room only has single bed. The size of the bed is normally 3ft x 6 ½ft. Most hotels have twin or double rooms and charge for single room of occupied by one person.
- ❖ **Double Room:** It is the room which provides double occupancy. This room has double bed. The size of the double bed is 5 feet by 6 feet.
- ❖ **Triple Room:** It is the room which provides occupancy for 3 people. Either it has 2 double & 1 single bed or 3 single beds. This type of rooms is suitable for groups and delegates of meetings and conferences.
- ❖ **Quad Room:** It is the room which provides occupancy for four guests. Either it has four single beds or two singles & one double bed.
- ❖ **Twin Room:** It is the room which is meant for double occupancy. These rooms have two single beds separated by a bed - side table.
- ❖ **Hollywood Room:** It is the room which provides double occupancy. It has two single beds close to each other with a common head - board.
- ❖ **Studio Room:** It is a living or sitting room. It has a sofa-cum-bed.
- ❖ **Parlor Room:** It is designed with the minimum basic requirement to live. It does not have the facilities of a bed room and hence used only for day use purpose.
- ❖ **Cabana Room:** It is the room which is situated near swimming pool or sea beach. This room is used for changing purpose. It has facilities for a shower, lockers, wooden benches, etc.
- ❖ **Suite Room:** Suite Room is a combination of one or more bedrooms & a drawing room. It may also contain a bar & small kitchen. The decor of such units is of very high standards, aimed to please the affluent guests who can afford the high tariffs of the room category. According to the design and market segment hotels give different names to suites like honeymoon suite, Executive suite, Deluxe suite, Maharaja suite etc.
- ❖ **Penthouse:** A room that opens onto the roof & may be accompanied by a swimming pool, patio, a tennis court, & other facilities & amenities. It has very opulent decor and furnishings and is among the costliest rooms in the hotels, preferred by celebrities and affluent people.

- ❖ **Executive Room:** A room that has a large bedroom with a sitting area provided with chairs & usually a sofa & coffee table. This is really a combination bedroom-cum-sitting room. Sometimes, a temporary wooden partition may be provided between the sitting area and bed room space. They are also known as junior suites.
- ❖ **Lanai Room:** It provides a large balcony attached with the room. From the balcony one gets a view of natural scenic beauty likes sea beach, mountain, valley etc. They are usually found in resort hotels.
- ❖ **Duplex Room:** They are two rooms at different levels inter connected through internal staircase. Usually one room is used as drawing room and other as bed room. This room is generally used by business men who wish to use the lower level as an office and meeting place and the upper level room as a bedroom.
- ❖ **Hospitality Room:** It is used by the guest to entertain his or her guests. It is hired on hourly basis and has facilities such as sofa sets, dining table, T.V, mini bar etc.
- ❖ **Interconnecting Rooms:** These are two rooms connected to each other by one interconnecting door. These rooms are preferred by groups and families.
- ❖ **Adjoining Room:** These rooms are situated next to each other sharing a common wall between them. These rooms may be given to the groups.
- ❖ **Queen Room:** A room has a queen size bed. The size of the bed is 5 feet by 6 & ½ feet. An extra bed may be added to this room on the request of a guest and charged accordingly.
- ❖ **King Room:** A king room has king size bed. The size of the bed is 6 feet by 6 & ½ feet. An extra bed may be added to this room on the request of a guest and charged accordingly.
- ❖ **Double-Double Room:** A double- double room has two double beds and is normally preferred by a family or group as it can accommodate four persons together. This room is usually preferred by families and is also known as family room and twin double room.
- ❖ **Efficiency Room:** Efficiency room is a room with a pantry/kitchen for basic cooking facility



Twin Room



Double Room



Hollywood Twin Room



Suite Room



Lanai Room



Penthouse Room



Hospitality Room



Duplex Room



Single Room



Double - Double Room

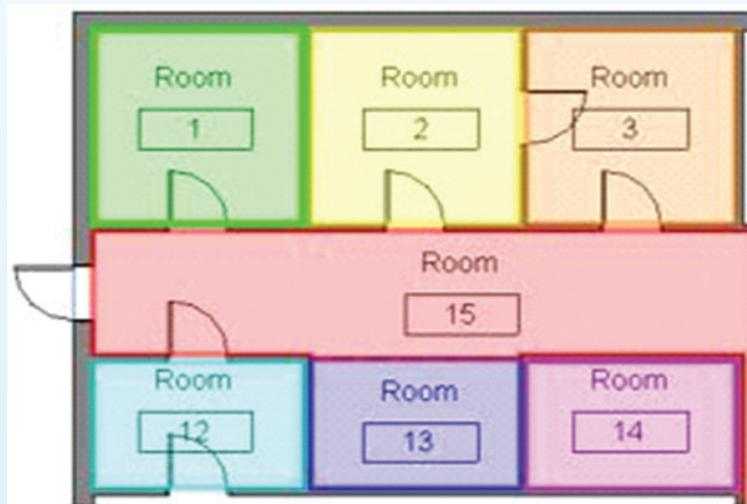


Fig : Interconnected and Adjoining /Adjacent Rooms

Room number 2 and 3 are interconnected while room number 13 and 14 are adjoining rooms.

Review Questions

Q. 1. Fill in the blanks:-

- (a) Room situated near swimming pool is known as _____.
- (b) Lanai Room has an attached _____.
- (c) Quad Room has _____ beds.
- (d) _____ Rooms have common wall between them.
- (e) _____ Room has an attached kitchen.

Q. 2. Match the following:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| (i) Hollywood Twin | a. Resort |
| (ii) Duplex Room | b. Roof Top |
| (iii) Penthouse | c. Common Head Board |
| (iv) Twin Double | d. Staircase |
| (v) Lanai | e. Family Room |

Q. 3. Answer the following questions:

- Q. 1. Write the different ways in which Hotel Rooms can be classified.
- Q. 2. List any ten types of Rooms you will find in a hotel.
- Q. 3. What is the difference between a Lanai Room and an Efficiency Room?
- Q. 4. What do you understand by Suite?
- Q. 5. Differentiate between Adjoining Rooms and Interconnecting Rooms?

2.4 Let us Sum up

Room is the main product of a hotel as they are primarily in the business of selling accommodation in addition to Food and Beverage. Front office personnel must be familiar with the types of rooms in the hotel and their features. Depending upon the target market of the hotel, a room mix is planned at the project stage. Receptionist should be able to suggest the room to the guest after assessing his requirement and his paying capacity. Common types of rooms offered by five star hotels include Single, Double, Twin, Suite, Pent house, Duplex, Lanai, Inter connecting room, etc.

2.5 Practical Activities

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Activity I: | Each student to prepare a model of any one type of guest room in a hotel and present it to the rest of class with explanation of its unique features. |
| Activity II: | In a group of four students to prepare a chart depicting four different types of rooms keeping in view the dimensions of beds and other facilities. |
| Activity III: | Group discussion on the relationship between type of hotel and the type of rooms offered by that type of hotel. |
| Activity IV: | Discussion on alternative type of room which may be offered to the guest if his desired type of room is not available in the hotel. |

UNIT 3

Meal Plans and Basis of Charging

Contents

- 3.0 Unit Overview and Description
 - ❖ Overview
 - ❖ Knowledge and Skill Outcomes
 - ❖ Resource Material
 - ❖ Learning Outcomes
 - ❖ Assessment Plan
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Meal Plans
- 3.3 Comparing the Meal Plans
- 3.4 Basis of Charging
- 3.5 Tariff Card
- 3.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.7 Practical Activities

3.0 Unit Overview and Description

Overview:

This unit will equip the student to differentiate between different types of meal plans offered by hotels as part of their room tariff package. The unit also enables him to know the different basis of charging and the concept of a tariff card.

Knowledge and Skill Outcomes:

- ❖ Different types of meal plans and their comparative analysis
- ❖ Different basis of charging room tariff
- ❖ Tariff card and its utility

Resource Material:

Hotel Front Office Operations & Management : Jatashankar R. Tiwari
Front Office Operations : Colin Dix, Chris Baird
Front Office Management : Sushil Kumar Bhatnagar
Front Office Management & Operations : Sudhir Andrews
Front Office Operations & Management : Rakesh Puri
Check-in Check-Out Managing Hotel Operations : Gary K. Vallen, Jerome J. Vallen
Principles of Hotel Front-Office Operations : Sue Baker, Jeremy Huyton, Pam Bradley

Learning Outcomes:

| Unit 3: Meal Plans and Basis of Charging | Outcomes |
|--|---|
| 3.1 Introduction | General Overview |
| 3.2 Meal Plans | ❖ You will be able to understand the concept of meal plans ❖ The unit will enable you to list different types of meal plans and to understand the features of each one of them |
| 3.3 Comparing the Meal Plans | ❖ You will be able to compare the different meal plans and their features. |
| 3.4 Basis of Charging | ❖ You will be able to list and understand the different basis of charging the room tariff to the hotel guests. |
| 3.5 Tariff Card | ❖ Sample tariff card will illustrate its usage and will equip you to plan the tariff card of a hotel |

Assessment Plan: (For the Teachers)

| Unit | Topic | Assessment Method | Time Plan | Remarks |
|------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| 3.1 | Introduction | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 3.2 | Meal Plans | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 3.3 | Comparing the Meal Plans | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 3.4 | Basis of Charging | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 3.5 | Tariff Card | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |

3.1 Introduction

When you visit a hotel and ask for the room tariff, you may get a reply like it is Rs. 2000/-. What do you understand by this information?

Actually nothing!

This information is incomplete till the time you know about the meals that are included in Rs.2000/-, the duration for which Rs. 2000/- will be charged, the type of room provided in this amount, whether the amount is inclusive of taxes or exclusive of it.

The requisite information mentioned above is recorded in a document known as 'Hotel Tariff Card' which tells us about the type of rooms, tariff, meal plan, basis of charging and tax structure.

Review Question

Q. 1 What is Hotel Tariff Card ?

3.2 Meal Plans

The room tariff of a hotel may be based on the choice meal plans offered to guests. Depending on the needs of their target audience, hotels offer a variety of meal plans, they are:

(a) European Plan (E.P.):

This plan includes only the room rent and anything that is taken from restaurant or the room service is charged to the guest.

(b) Continental Plan (C.P.):

This plan includes continental breakfast along with the room rent. Anything extra that is taken is charged to the guest.

(c) Bermuda Plan (B.P.):

This plan includes American breakfast along with the room rent.

(d) Modified American Plan (M.A.P.):

This plan includes room rent along with breakfast and one of the major meals i.e. Lunch or Dinner. The guest has to specify his preference at the time of arrival. This plan is also known as half board plan or Demi Pension.

(e) American Plan (A.P.):

This plan contains room rent and all the major meals i.e. breakfast, lunch and dinner. It is also known as all inclusive plan and in French it is known as En Pension.

European Plan :

In this case only the lodging i.e. bed is offered. Thus the charges are made for lodging only. The client is free to take or not to take tea, breakfast, and meals in the hotel. He has a choice of eating at any other good restaurant. The guest is booked to pay for lodging only and is charged separately for all other things or services he enjoys or consumes. This system is generally followed by youth hostels or hotels which are situated in metropolitan cities. European plan hotels fix the prices of rooms separately so that guest may either have their meals in the hotel dining at its regular prices or go to the other restaurant. In India most of the hotels are being run on European Plan.

Continental Plan

In the case of continental plan bed and breakfast are included in the charges. Thus bed is offered along with breakfast and the client is, however, free to take his meal and tea as he likes. Thus the guest tariff includes lodging and breakfast and for other he is separately billed.

American Plan

Hotel where American plan is prevalent, board lodging is provided in the charge. The tariff fixed includes board and lodging. It is an all inclusive full board tariff. Accommodation and three meals daily are included in the price of the room. It includes bed, breakfast and two principal meals and evening tea. It does not include EMT nor coffee after lunch, or dinner. It is also known as 'En pension 'or full board plan.

This means that guest's day ends about 24 hours after his arrival that is; the guest arriving between lunch and dinner is entitled to retain his room until the next afternoon and to have dinner the first night and breakfast and lunch the following day for the fixed rate.

Modified American Plan

The tourists mostly prefer this plan, as it is comparatively flexible. It is offered in most of the good hotels and is normally by arrangement. It includes hotel accommodation, breakfast and either lunch or dinner in the price of the room. Thus, in this type of accommodation bed and breakfast and along with it one principal meal, lunch or dinner, at the discretion of the client is also included. It generally includes continental breakfast and either lunch or dinner in the room rates. It is also known as 'Demi-Pension'.

Review Question

Q. 1 Define the variety of Meal Plans a Hotel can offer.

3.3 Comparing the Meal Plans

| Meal Plan | Other Name | Inclusions | Preferred by |
|------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|
| European Plan | Room only Plan | Room only | Business Hotels, Transit Hotels, Motels |
| Continental Plan | Bed & Breakfast Plan | Room + Continental Breakfast | Business Hotels |
| Bermuda Plan | Bed & Breakfast Plan | Room + American Breakfast | Hotels with lot of sight seeing around such as historical/ heritage destinations |
| American Plan | Full Board / En Pension | Room + Continental Breakfast + Lunch + Dinner | Resorts |
| Modified American Plan | Half Board/ Demi-Pension | Room + Continental Breakfast + Lunch/ Dinner | Resorts |

Uses of Meal Plans

Commercial hotels prefer E.P. because:

- 1) Since the commercial hotels are situated in urban areas, there are bound to be numerous restaurants in the vicinity. Hence the guest would prefer to keep his option open as far as meals are concerned. Moreover, the hotel may not have a particular cuisine, which the guest likes. Secondly, the business traveler does not want to get tied up to meal timings because of his day round business activities.
- 2) On the other hand the hotel being situated in an urban area would get a plenty of chance guests in

their restaurants. Thus their food and beverage income is not restricted to only hotel residents. They do offer meal inclusive plans but only to groups sent by Travelers Agents and company bookings for conventions, seminars etc.

Resort Hotels prefer MAP/AP because:

- 1) These may be situated in an isolated place with hardly any restaurants in the vicinity. Guests, therefore, would prefer to have meals in the hotels. For tourist wishing to go site seeing during the day, MAP would be more appropriate.
- 2) The hotel itself benefit from this plan since it relies only on resident guests for their food and beverage income. The continental Plan lies between the A.P. and E.P. thus, it may be offered by commercial hotels as well as resort hotels as an alternative to the E.P. and M.A.P.

Review Questions

Q. 1. Fill in the blanks:

- (a) Room Rent and Continental Breakfast are included in _____.
- (b) American Plan is also known as _____.
- (c) American Breakfast and Room Rent is included in _____.
- (d) _____ is also known as Demi-Pension.

Q. 2. State True or False:

- (a) Continental Plan includes Lunch and Breakfast.
- (b) Bermuda Plan is also known as European Plan.
- (c) Full Board Plan is American Plan.

Q. 3. Answer the following questions

- Q. 1. Illustrate the different types of meal plan with the help of a chart.
- Q. 2. What type of meal plan is preferred by Resorts and why?

3.4 Basis of Charging

There are different basis of charging room tariff which decide the duration for which a guest can stay in his room by paying one unit of the charge. Different basis of charging commonly followed are listed as below:

(I) Fixed Check Out Time Basis:

In this system a particular time of the day is fixed as check in/out time. It may be either 10.00 hrs or 12 noon. Mostly the hotels follow 1200 hours check in/out time. It is the most commonly followed basis of charging as it gives them a control of their check-in and check-out time and thereby enabling them to accept advance bookings for their rooms. This is advantage to our hotels as it earns more revenue for the hotel.

It has a major disadvantage of losing its goodwill as the customers are not satisfied with the billing. For example suppose a guest checks in at 10.00 hrs of 17th.

November and checks out at 1400 hrs of 18th November and the check-out time is 12 Noon, then

he will be charged for 3 days. Thus we see that even though he is staying for just one day and 4 hours but he is charged for 3 days.

(II) Twenty Four Hours Check out Time Basis:

In this system the guest is charged according to the time of arrival that means that one day is calculated from the time he arrives in hotel till the same time next day. This is advantageous to the guest but earns less revenue to the hotel, for example let us consider same example as given above through this system he will be charged only for 2 days. In twenty four hours check out time basis hotels find it difficult to take advance bookings as they don't know what time of the day their rooms will be available for the next guest.

(III) Night Basis:

In this system guest is charged according to the number of nights he spent in the hotel. This system is usually found in resort hotels. In order to calculate night basis charges the guest should have stayed for a minimum period of nights. For example suppose a guest checks in 10.00 hrs on 17th November and checks out at 14.00 hrs on 25th Nov. then he will be charged for 8 nights.

(IV) Day Rate Or Day Used Rate Basis:

It is another form evolved from night basis and room rent is charged for maximum 6 hours included in the stay which is never overnight.

Review Question

Q. 1 List and explain the different basis of charging room tariff in a Hotel.

3.5 Tariff Card

Room Tariff

Check out time 12 Noon

| Type | Non A.C. Rs./day | A.C. Rs./day |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Deluxe Room | 1350 | --- |
| Deluxe Executive Room | 1650 | 2600 |
| Executive Room | --- | 2800 |
| Super Executive Suite | --- | 3700 |
| Prince of Wales Suite | --- | 5000 |
| The Royale Suite | --- | 5500 |
| Maharaja Suite | --- | 6000 |
| Extra Person/Child Above 5 Year | 300 | 400 |

Rates subject to revision without notice, Service charges and taxes extra as applicable.

TARIFF EFFECTIVE FROM 01-01-2011

Above rates on European plan. Check-out time: 12 Noon.

Review Questions

Q. 1. Fill in the blanks:

- (a) The document in which meal plan and room rate is printed is known as _____ Card.
- (b) Usually, the check-out time of the hotels is _____ noon.
- (c) If a guest checks-in at 9 am and checks out at 6 pm the next day, he will be charged _____ three day tariff in a 12 noon check-out basis.

Q. 2. Answer the following questions :

Q. 1. List the different basis of charging. Explain 24 hrs basis in detail.

Q. 2. What is a tariff card?

Q. 3. Check-out time basis is the most commonly used system of charging in hotels Elaborate?

3.6 Let us Sum up

Room tariff is a complex issue which does not include just the charge for a room. It has a component of the meal plan which suggests the meals included in the charged tariff. Different meal plans include European, Continental, American, Modified American and Bermuda plan. Depending upon the meal plan breakfast and main meals may or may not be included in the room tariff.

Basis of charging refers to the duration for which a single unit tariff is charged. It may be 24 hrs, Night basis or a check-out time basis.

Details of meal plan and basis of charging along with types of rooms, facilities, tax structure, child policy are specified in a document known as tariff card.

3.7 Practical Activities

Activity I: Students to perform a role play interacting as a group of guests and front office personnel discussing the contents of different meal plans offered by the hotel and their applicability depending upon the specific requirement of each guest.

Activity II: Work sheet
Fill the following in given chart
 Room only Plan, Bed & Breakfast Plan, Room + American Breakfast, Room + Continental Breakfast+ Lunch+ Dinner, Resorts.

| Meal Plan | Other Name | Inclusions | Preferred by |
|------------------|------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| European Plan | | Room only | Business hotel, Transit hotel, Motels |
| Continental Plan | | Room + Continental Breakfast | Business Hotels |

| | | | | |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------|--|---|
| | Bermuda Plan | Bed & Breakfast Plan | | Hotels with lot of sightseeing around such as historical /heritage destinations |
| | American Plan | Full Board / En Pension | | Resorts |
| | Modified American Plan | Half Board/ Demi-Pension | Room + Continental Breakfast + Lunch/ Dinner | Resorts |
| Activity III: | Group discussion on relative merits and demerits of Check out time basis of charging and 24 hrs basis of charging. | | | |
| Activity IV: | A guest checked in at 09.00 hrs and checked out at 18.00 the next day. According to the 12 noon check-out time basis he is to be charged for three days. Enact a role play on the ensuing argument between the guest and the cashier and the explanation provided by the hotel to the guest on this system of charging. | | | |
| Activity V: | Students should visit nearby hotels and collect tariff cards from the reception. Each student should design a tariff card of Hotel ABC on the basis of his own creativity. | | | |
| Activity VI: | <p>Role play by two Students one as a Guest and other one as a Receptionist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Receptionist: Sir, Welcome to Taj hotel. How can I assist you. ❖ Guest: Well I need room for 3-days. ❖ Receptionist: Sir, what kind of room you are looking for. May I know about your requirements and may I know your good name please. ❖ Guest: I am R.K. Ravi from Chennai. ❖ Guest: Well I am looking for a Family Room. ❖ Receptionist: Sir may I know how many persons are there in your family. ❖ Guest: Sure. We are four members. Myself, my wife and two kids. ❖ Receptionist: Sir can you please tell me the age of your children? ❖ Guest: Yes, of course, my daughter is 10 year old, and my son is 5 year old. ❖ Receptionist: May I know your purpose of visit please. ❖ Guest: Well I have come here for sight seeing. ❖ Receptionist: Mr. Ravi as you have said you need room for 3-days ,so the check out date would be on 16th December. ❖ Guest: Yes today is 13th December and I will check out on 16th morning at 10 am | | | |

- ❖ **Receptionist:** Sir I can offer you suite room which will have drawing room and living room separate and the price of the room is Rs 35,000 all inclusive of tax and food. Our check out time is 12 noon.
- ❖ **Guest:** Well I think it is very expensive for me.
- ❖ **Receptionist:** Not at all sir because the room cost and food all inclusive (all three meals) this is a package for your family we are offering you.
- ❖ **Guest:** Can you show me the tariff card.
- ❖ **Receptionist:** yes, sure sir.
Now the guest goes through the tariff card in which the details of meal plan and other facilities of hotel are mentioned. After going through the tariff card he is satisfied and informs the receptionist to book the suite room @35,000 all inclusive.
- ❖ **Receptionist:** Sir please fills up the registration card, and can I have your identity proof.
- ❖ **Guest:** Oh yes! Here is my Driving License
Receptionist checks all details of the filled registration card and mention the room no in G.R.C as 506 and informs the guest that he will be escorted by the bell boy along with his luggage.
- ❖ **Receptionist:** Have a pleasant stay with us.

UNIT 4

Front Office

Contents

- 4.0 Unit Overview and Description
 - ❖ Overview
 - ❖ Knowledge and Skill Outcomes
 - ❖ Resource Material
 - ❖ Learning Outcomes
 - ❖ Assessment Plan
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Staffing the Front Office
- 4.3 Staff Hierarchy chart of a Large and Medium Sized Hotel
- 4.4 Sections of Front Office Department
- 4.5 Functional Organization of Front Office Department
- 4.6 Equipment used in Front Office
- 4.7 Duties and Responsibilities of Front Office Personnel
- 4.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.9 Practical Activities

4.0 Unit Overview and Description

Overview:

This unit will provide information to the student on organization of front office department in terms of its staff hierarchy and functional structure. Student will be able to know the duties and responsibilities of front office personnel at different levels. The unit will also enable him to list the equipments used in a manual, semi-automated and fully automated operation and the respective usage of these equipments.

Knowledge and Skill Outcomes:

- ❖ Staff hierarchy of front office department in a large and medium size hotel
- ❖ Different sections of front office department and their functions
- ❖ Equipments used in front office department in a manual, semi-automated and fully-automated operation.

Resource Material:

Hotel Front Office Operations & Management : Jatashankar R. Tiwari

Front Office Operations : Colin Dix, Chris Baird

Front Office Management : Sushil Kumar Bhatnagar

Front Office Management & Operations : Sudhir Andrews

Front Office Operations & Management : Rakesh Puri

Check-in Check-Out Managing Hotel Operations : Gary K. Vallen, Jerome J. Vallen

Principles of Hotel Front-Office Operations : Sue Baker, Jeremy Huyton, Pam Bradley

Learning Outcomes:

| Unit 4 : Front Office | | Outcomes |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| 4.1 | Introduction | General Overview |
| 4.2 | Staffing the Front Office | ❖ In this section, you will get a broad overview of the staff organization of front office department in a hotel. |
| 4.3 | Staff Hierarchy chart of a Large and Medium Size Hotel | ❖ You will be able to draw the staff hierarchy chart of a large and medium size hotel. |
| 4.4 | Sections of Front Office Department | ❖ You will be able to list all the sections of front office. |
| 4.5 | Functional Organization of Front Office Department | ❖ This unit will enable you to understand the functions of each section in front office department. |
| 4.6 | Equipment used in Front Office | ❖ You will be able to list, differentiate and understand the usage of equipments used in front office department in manual, semi-automated and automated operation respectively. |
| 4.7 | Duties and Responsibilities of Front Office Personnel | ❖ This section details the duties, responsibilities, educational qualification, and reporting officer for different job positions in front office department. |

Assessment Plan: (For the Teachers)

| Unit | Topic | Assessment Method | Time Plan | Remarks |
|------|---|------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| 4.1 | Introduction | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 4.2 | Staffing the Front Office | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 4.3 | Staff Hierarchy Chart of a Large and Medium Sized Hotel | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 4.4 | Sections of Front Office Department | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 4.5 | Functional Organization of Front Office Department | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 4.6 | Equipment used in Front Office | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 4.7 | Duties and Responsibilities of Front Office Personnel | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |

4.1 Introduction

The Front Office truly is the nerve center of a hotel. It can be defined as a front of the house department located around the foyer and the lobby area of a hospitality property. As this department is located around the foyer area of the hotel and is visible to the guests, patrons and visitors, they are collectively called “Front Office”. It is one of the major operational and revenue producing departments of the hotel which generates two third of the revenue earned by a hotel from the sale of the guestrooms. It involve in providing valuable services to the guests during the entire guest cycle consisting of Pre-arrival, Arrival, Occupancy and Departure.

Importance of Front Office

Traditional Front Office functions include reservation, registration, room and rate assignment, guest services, room status, maintenance and settlement of guest account, and creation of guest history records. The Front Office develops and maintains a comprehensive database of guest information, coordinates guest services, and ensures guest satisfaction. These functions are accomplished by personal in diverse areas of Front Office Department.

Front office is also known as the face of the hotel. It is the first guest contact area and also the nerve center of the hotel. All the activities and areas of the front office are geared towards supporting guest transaction and services.

The major functions that are performed by the front office department are:

- a) Reservation and Registration of Rooms & Rate Assignment
- b) Fulfills Guest Services and Updates Room Status
- c) Maintains & Settles Guest Accounts
- d) Creates Guest History Records
- e) Develops & Maintains a Comprehensive Database of Guest Information
- f) Coordinates Guest Services

Review Questions

Q. 1. Fill in the blanks:

- (a) Front office is also known as the _____ center of the Hotel
- (b) On an average rooms division is estimated to generate _____ revenue for a Hotel
- (c) Guest cycle consists of pre-arrival _____ and _____

4.2 Staffing the Front Office

In order to carry out its mission, goals and objectives, every company shall build a formal structure depicting different hierarchy of management, supervision, and employee (staff) levels. This very structure is referred to as organization chart. Moreover, the organization chart shows reporting relationships, span of management, and staff/line functions.

The Front Office organization chart shall be designed according to Functions. Doing so not only enhances the control the Front Office has over its Operations, but also provides guests with more specialized attention. Such a division according to functions, however, is not practical in middle and small size hotels

due to the fact that these very hotels don't possess enough and sufficient monetary resources to ensure the existence of at least three jobholders (i.e. one for each shift) for each job position. Therefore, in middle size hotels, a front office agent might be responsible for more than one work position. This is ensured via cross training. On the other hand, in small size hotels, one or two front office agents might be responsible for all front office activities.

Staff Positions under the Rooms Division Department:

- ❖ **Front Desk Agent:** Registers guests, and maintains room availability information.
- ❖ **Cashier:** Maintains and settles guest folios, and properly checks out guests.
- ❖ **Night Auditor:** Controls the job of the Accounts Receivable Clerk, and prepares daily reports to management (ex: Occupancy Report and Revenue Report).
- ❖ **Mail & Information Clerk:** Takes Messages, provides Directions to Guests, and maintains Mail.
- ❖ **Telephone Operator:** Manages the Switch board and coordinates Wake-up Calls.
- ❖ **Reservation Agent:** Responds to Reservation Requests and creates Reservation Records.
- ❖ **Uniformed Service Agents:** Handles Guest Luggage, escorts Guests to their Rooms, and assists guests for any bit of information requested.



Receptionist



Door man



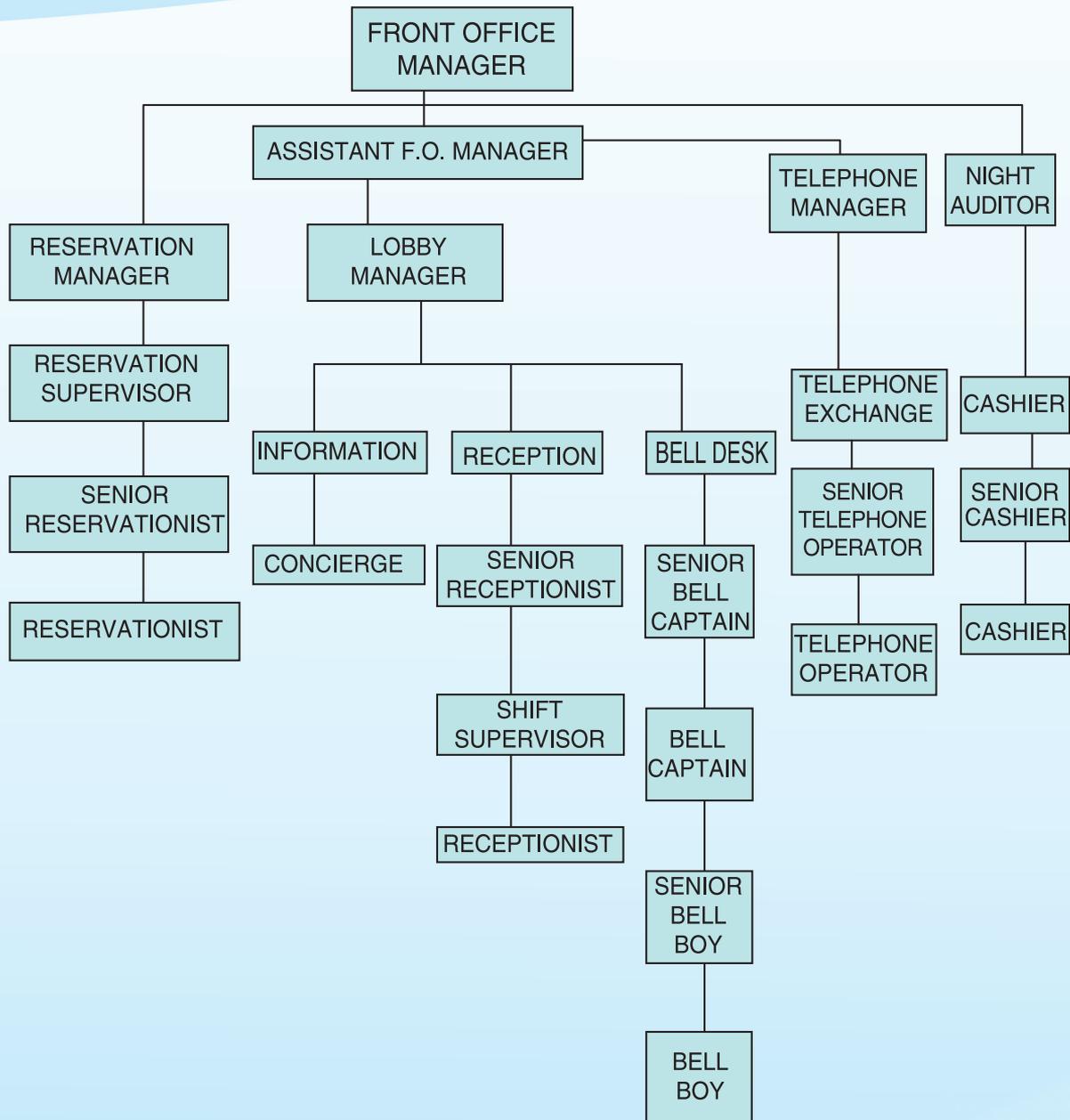
Bell boy

Review Question

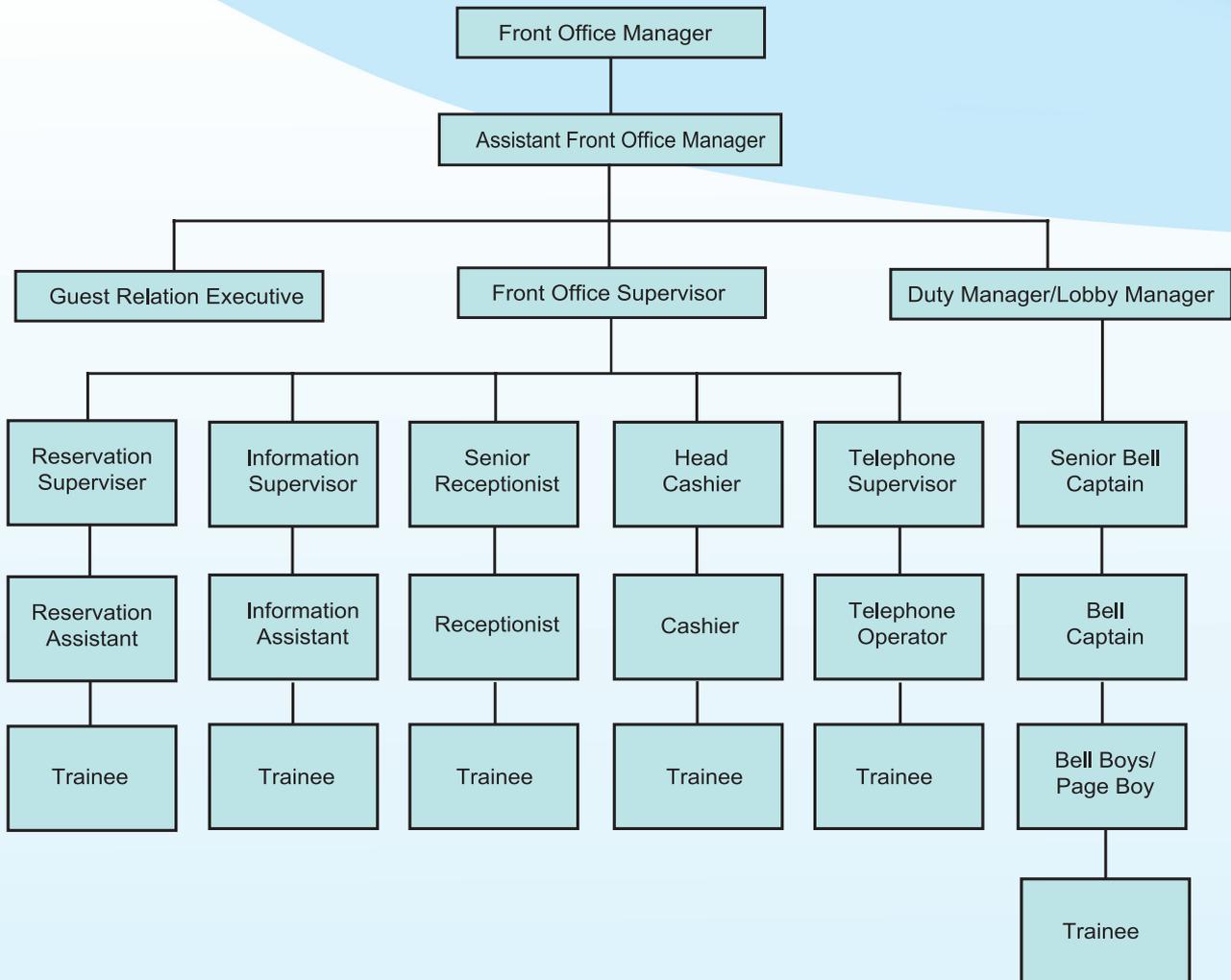
Q. 1. List the major staff positions under the rooms division department with a one line description of each.

4.3 Staff Hierarchy chart of a Large and Medium Sized Hotel

Hierarchy chart: Large Hotel



Hierarchy Chart : Medium Sized Hotel



Review Questions

Q. 1. Match the following:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| (1) Night Auditor | a. V.I.P Guest |
| (2) Cashier | b. Uniformed Service |
| (3) Duty Manager | c. Bill |
| (4) Bell Captain | d. Lobby Manager |
| (5) G.R.E | e. Revenue Report |

Q. 2. Answer the following questions:

- Q. 1. Draw the Staff organization chart of front office for a large hotel.
 Q. 2. Write major functions of front office department.

4.4 Sections of Front Office Department

Following sections in a hotel together form what we call the front office department of a hotel:

- (1) Reservation
- (2) Reception
- (3) Information Desk
- (4) Cash and Bills
- (5) Travel Desk
- (6) Telephone Section
- (7) Uniformed Services
- (8) Bell Desk
- (9) Concierge

Review Question

Q. 1 List the sections in a hotel which are together known as the front office.

4.5 Functional Organization of Front Office Department

(a) Reception

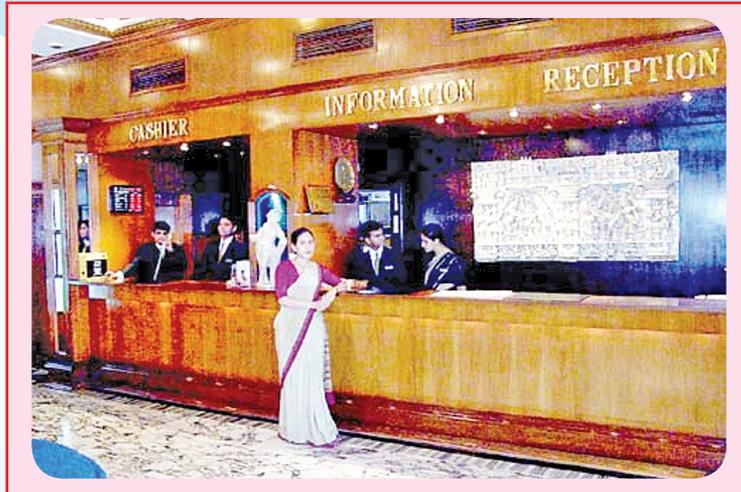


This section of the front office receives and welcomes guest on their arrival in the hotel. It is headed by a supervisor and comprise a team of receptionist of front desk assistant. After finishing the registration, a room is assigned to the guest and a bell boy carries the luggage and escorts the guest to his her room. The entire process is carried out professionally in warm and friendly atmosphere.

Functions of Reception: The following functions are performed by the reception section of a hotel:

- (1) Receiving and welcoming guests.
- (2) Completing the registration formalities.
- (3) Assigning the room.
- (4) Sending arrival notification slips to the concerned departments.

(b) Information Desk



As the name suggests, the information desk provides information to guests. It is manned by an information assistant. In a small hotel, the same function may be performed by the receptionist. The need of a separate information desk is felt in large hotels where the traffic of guests is higher.

Functions of Information Desk: Some of the functions of the information desk are as under:

- (1) Maintaining resident guest rack.
- (2) Handling guest room keys.
- (3) Coordinating guest mails, telegrams, faxes, couriers, parcels, etc.
- (4) Providing information to guests regarding hotel facilities and services, city information, etc.
- (5) Handling guests messages.
- (6) Paging

(c) Reservation

The reservation sections of the front office department of a hotel are responsible for receiving and processing reservation queries. Depending upon the level of automation, volume of business and house customs the procedure of processing reservations handling, maintenance of reservation, records, confirmation, and cancellation are handled. This department is also known as back office as it is situated at back area and not visible to guest.

Functions of the reservation section: This section performs the following tasks:

- (1) Receiving reservation requests through various means like telephone, fax, email or central reservation departments.
- (2) Processing reservation request received from all means on the property management system.
- (3) Updating the room availability status after such each reservation transaction.
- (4) Maintaining and updating reservation records to reflect accurate information about room status.
- (5) Preparing reservation reports for the management.

(d) Cash and Bills

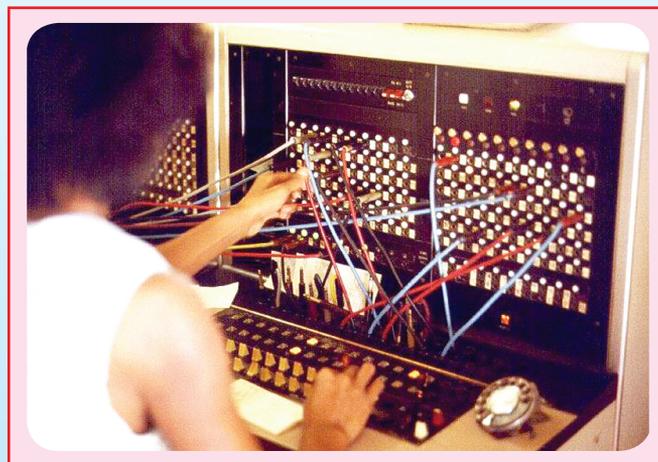


The cash and bills section records all the monetary transactions of guests. It maintains guest folios and prepares the guest bills to be settled by the guest at the time of departure. This section is headed by a cashier.

Functions of the Cash and Bills Section: This section performs the following tasks:

- (1) Opening and maintaining of guest folios.
- (2) Posting room charges in guest folios.
- (3) Recording all credit charges in guest folios.
- (4) Maintaining a record of the cash received from guests.
- (5) Preparing bills at the time of check-out.
- (6) Receiving cash/TC/demand draft for account settlement.
- (7) Handling credit/debit/charge cards for the settlement of a guest account.
- (8) Organizing foreign currency exchange for the settlement of a guest account.

(e) Telephone



The telephone section maintains the communication network of the hotel, which is generally quite complex. The hotel may have its own private branch exchange (PBX), along with post and telegraph lines.

Functions of Communication Desk : The duties of the telephone operator include:

- (1) Answering incoming calls.
- (2) Directing calls to guest rooms through the switch board/EPABX.
- (3) Providing information on guest services.
- (4) Processing guest wake-up calls.
- (5) Answering inquiries about hotel facilities and events.
- (6) Protecting guests privacy.
- (7) Coordinating emergency communication.

(f) Travel Desk

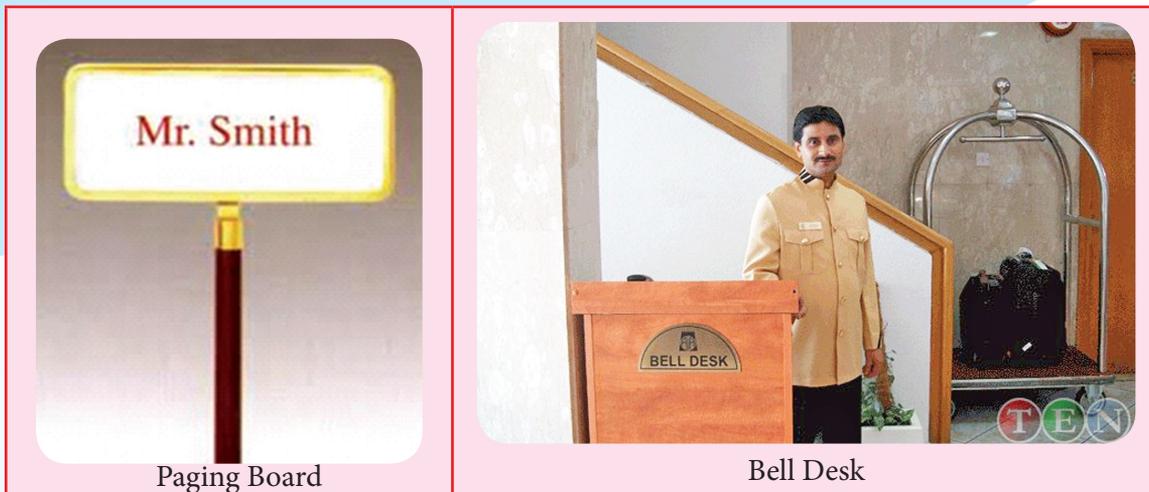


The travel desk takes care of travel arrangements of guests, like air-ticketing, railway reservations, sightseeing tours, airport or railway station pick up or drop, etc. The hotel may operate the travel desk or it may be outsourced to an external travel agency.

Functions of Travel Desk : The travel desk performs the following tasks:

- (1) Arranging pick-up and drop services for guests at the time of their arrival and departure.
- (2) Providing vehicles on request to guests at pre-determined rates .
- (3) Making travel arrangements like railway reservation/air-tickets.
- (4) Organizing half-day or full-day sightseeing.
- (5) Arranging for guides who can communicate in the guest's language.

(g) Bell Desk



Paging Board

Bell Desk

The bell desk is located very close to the main entrance of the hotel. This section is headed by a bell captain, who leads a team of bell boys and page boys.

Functions of bell desk: The bell desk is responsible for the following tasks:

- (1) Handling guest luggage at the time of arrival and departure.
- (2) Escorting guests to their rooms on arrival.
- (3) Familiarizing guests about safety features and in-room facilities.
- (4) Making sundry purchases for the guest.
- (5) At request keeps guest luggage in the left luggage room.

(h) Concierge



The concept of concierges came from the days of European royalty. The concierge was the castle door keeper in those times. His duty was to ensure that all castle occupants were safe in their rooms at night. A concierge is often expected to achieve the impossible

Functions of concierge : The concierge provides the following services to guests:

- (1) Making reservations for dining in famous restaurants.
- (2) Obtaining tickets for theatres, musicals, sporting events.
- (3) Arranging for transportation by limousine, car, coaches, buses, airplanes, or trains.
- (4) Providing information on cultural and social events like photo exhibitions, art shows etc.

Review Questions

Q.1 Match the following:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| (1) Concierge | a. Paging |
| (2) Bell Desk | b. Reservations |
| (3) Guest Folio | c. Reception |
| (4) Advance Booking | d. Theatre Tickets |
| (5) Key Handling | e. Cashier |

Q.2 Fill in the blanks:

- a) Newspaper is distributed by _____.
- b) Guest registration is done by _____.
- c) Wake up call are given by _____.
- d) Reception assigns the _____ to _____.
- e) Bell desk handles the _____.

Q.3 Answer the following questions:

- Q. 1. Write functions of concierge.
- Q. 2. What do you understand by EPABX?
- Q. 3. What is the difference between the reservation and reception section of the office department?

4.6 Equipment used in Front Office

(A) Manual equipments:

- ❖ **Whitney Rack:** This system of room reservation, developed by the American Whitney Duplicating Check Company, is suitable for small and medium properties with up to 150 rooms. It is based on the use of standard size slips, known as Whitney slips or Shannon slips, which can be held on a metallic carrier on Whitney racks. The racks and carriers can be used over and over again. The running expense is only of the slips. The Whitney racks are placed vertically, saving storage space.
- ❖ **Information rack:** It is important device position in the front desk and is used by the front desk agents to track the various in house guest of the hotel. The information contain is arranged alphabetically and consists of the following.
 - a. Name of the guest.
 - b. Number of the room.

- c. Type of the room occupied.
- d. Rate of guest room.
- e. Date of arrival and departure.
- f. Billing instructions.

- ❖ **Mail and message rack:** It is wooden frame work containing an array of pigeon holes (wooden rack in square shape to leave message). Each pigeon hole is used to store various mail and message received for in house guests.



- ❖ **Key racks:** Key racks are front office equipment located underneath the counter of the front desk. It is a wooden or metallic frame work containing slots for keeping the keys of the guest in sequential order of the guests present in their rooms.
- ❖ **Folio bucket:** It is an equipment which contains large number of slots where one can keep folios arranged sequentially according to the room number. This folio well is used to store and track the folio of the various registered guest.

(B) Semi Automated equipments:

- ❖ **Accounting posting machine:** It is very essential equipments used for posting the various charges on the accounts of the guest. The posting machine is generally used to calculate the total of the guest accounts and transactions.



- ❖ **Cash register:** It is generally used by the front desk to record the various sundry sales at the front desk such as stamps, newspaper, candy etc.

- ❖ **Wake up devices:** These devices are used by telephone department to remind the staff of awakening of the guest at requested time. The most common wake up devices is known as James remind-o (a kind of alarm clock with pull pin system).



- ❖ **Credit card imprinter:** This equipment is used when especially guest presents credit card, at the time of their arrivals or departure to settle their bill. It is used to make an imprint of the credit card used by the guest as a mode of payment.

- ❖ **Type writer:** Are used for preparing various documents related to the front office operations and also related to the guest.



(C) Automated Equipments



- ❖ **Credit card validator:** It is also known as EDC or electronic data capturing machine. It is used by the cashier to check the validity of the credit card presented by the guest. This equipment is linked to the credit card data bank which holds information concerning the validity of the credit card. This ensures that the guest has the credit balance high enough to cover the projected charges and also verifies the ownerships of the guest from the card.

- ❖ **Fax machine:** Fax (Facsimile automatic Xerox machine) this machine is used through telephone lines and are used to receive and sent official documents. The operator dials the destination fax machine number and then sends the fax message inserting the message page into the machine.



- ❖ **Call accounting system:** It is fully computerized telephone system which allows the proper billing of the outgoing calls of the guest. It is also known as APBX (Automatic private branch exchange).

- ❖ **Computer:** Are used widely in front office department for the purpose of reservation, registration, accounting and auditing. Computer can also store and retrieve important data of the guest to carry out various services. A hotel management software is required to effectively use computers in hotel operations.



Review Questions

- Q.1 State True or false:
- (a) James remind-o is a kind of alarm clock .
 - (b) Call accounting system is also known as APBX.
 - (c) Cash register is used at cashier desk.
 - (d) Whitney rack has pigeon holes.
 - (e) Guest folio is used in reception.
- Q.2 Fill in the blanks:
- (a) APBX stands for _____.
 - (b) Guest folios are kept arranged in a folio _____.
 - (c) FAX stands for _____.
 - (d) _____ contains Shanon Slips
 - (e) Validity of credit card is checked by_____.
- Q.3 Answer the following questions:
- Q. 1. Write short note on manual equipments used in front office?
 - Q. 2. What kind of information is kept at information rack?
 - Q. 3. Discuss in brief different equipments used in an automated front office system.

4.7 Duties and Responsibilities of Front Office Personnel

❖ **JOB TITLE:- FRONT OFFICE MANAGER**

REPORTS TO:- GENERAL MANAGER

QUALIFICATION:- Degree or diploma in hotel management.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- (a) Recommend and monitor front office budget and plan for the year.
- (b) Lead train and motivate front office team.
- (c) Check the arrivals of the day and inform VIP arrivals to management.
- (d) Approve expenses of the front office department.
- (e) Ensure the safety and hygiene of the front office and its staff.
- (f) Maintain discipline and conduct staff appraisals regularly or as per policy.
- (g) Co-ordinate with housekeeping and engineering to ensure room availability for sale.
- (h) Monitor the reservation system.
- (i) Exercise revenue and yield management to maximize room income.
- (j) Introduce technology to improve efficiency and information for decision making.
- (k) Resolve guest and staff complaint.

❖ **JOB TITLE:- ASSISTANT FRONT OFFICE MANAGER**

REPORTS TO:- FRONT OFFICE MANAGER

QUALIFICATION:- Degree or diploma in hotel management.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- (a) Act in the capacity of the front office manager in his/her absence and ensure the smooth functioning of the front office.
- (b) Allot daily duties to subordinate staff to meet work exigencies ensuring equity of work.
- (c) Conduct daily briefing using it as a vehicle for a two way communication, training and corrective action.
- (d) Attend to guest complaints to ensure guest satisfaction through immediate action.
- (e) Check the daily arrivals and departures at the hotel and tally it with room position.
- (f) Organize the training of staff for meeting the standards of service.
- (g) Develop room sales through up selling, guest contacts to ensure good service.
- (h) Ensure that the front office is free from work hazards.
- (i) Control cost of supplies.
- (j) Motivate staff through fair leadership.

❖ **JOB TITLE:- FRONT OFFICE SUPERVISOR**

REPORTS TO:- FRONT OFFICE MANAGER

QUALIFICATION:- Degree or diploma in hotel management.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- (a) Ensure that all staff reports on time, is wearing proper uniform and well groomed as per hotel standard.
- (b) Take over from the previous shift and check the log book for follow up actions.
- (c) Assign duties ensuring equal distribution of work load during a shift.
- (d) Check arrivals and departures and tally the room position.
- (e) Check the room key position and report any missing key.
- (f) Meet and greet all arrivals and ensure accurate and speedy roaming.
- (g) Check all equipment for service ability.
- (h) Check statistical data such as Daily room revenue, occupancy, house count, VIP list, room report, Guest folios.
- (i) Assist in registering guest during busy periods.
- (j) Ensure that staff meet hygiene and discipline standards.

❖ **JOB TITLE:- LOBBY MANAGER**

REPORTS TO:- FRONT OFFICE MANAGER

QUALIFICATION:- Degree or diploma in hotel management.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- (a) Take over shift from previous lobby manager and note and special instruction for the shift.

- (b) Brief staff of uniformed service.
- (c) Make sure the lobby is clean and tidy.
- (d) Manage scanty baggage procedure.
- (e) Monitor check in of groups and airline crew.
- (f) Manages the discipline of the uniformed service.
- (g) Attend to any disputes over guest billing.
- (h) Training of the staff working in lobby area.
- (i) Coordinate all guest requests with all departments of the hotels.
- (j) Assist the security in lobby surveillance.
- (k) Overall the concierge, bell desk service and valet parking, door man service and transportation.
- (l) Acts on behalf of the front office management at night.
- (m) Custodian of the master key and the keys to all stores (at night).

❖ **JOB TITLE:-** RECEPTIONIST

REPORTS TO:- FRONT OFFICE SUPERVISOR

QUALIFICATION:- Degree or diploma in hotel management.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- (a) Check the arrivals of the day and room status including departures for the day.
- (b) Check the expected VIPS for the day and issues VIP amenities vouchers for fruits, flowers, beverages etc as per policy.
- (c) Prepare records and pre registrations for VIP, handicapped people and old people.
- (d) Handle group/crew registration as per laid down procedures.
- (e) Register all arrivals during the shift.
- (f) Constantly update room rack front office database.
- (g) Give departure rooms to housekeeping without delays.
- (h) Assist in making room occupancy reports.
- (i) Up sell rooms to get higher revenues.
- (j) Handle guest with scanty baggage diligently.
- (k) Update guest history periodically to maintain an accurate database.

❖ **JOB TITLE:-** RESERVATION ASSISTANT

REPORTS TO:- FRONT OFFICE MANAGER

QUALIFICATION:- Degree or diploma in hotel management.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- (a) Update the reservation register to obtain and maintain a current inventory position.
- (b) Attend briefings at the beginning of the shift.
- (c) Type out advance reservation slips and maintains reservation racks and correspondence.
- (d) Carry out amendments and cancellations of reservation accurately.
- (e) Keep room status board and database update at all times.

- (f) Update the reservation register to obtain and maintain current from inventory position.
- (g) Check the reservation stationary and requisition supplies wherever necessary.
- (h) Up sell rooms to generate revenue.
- (i) Maintain guest history sheets.

❖ **JOB TITLE:- FRONT OFFICE CASHIER**

REPORTS TO:- FRONT OFFICE SUPERVISOR

QUALIFICATION:- Degree or diploma in hotel management.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- (a) Take over a shift and note special instructions for the shift.
- (b) Issue safety deposit lockers to guest according to procedure.
- (c) Disburse petty cash and authorized paid outs.
- (d) Pass allowances as directed or wrong charges posted in folios.
- (e) Handle credit card payments through proper procedure.
- (f) Accept personal checks after ensuring proper authorized.
- (g) Prepare the front office cashiers report and other reports.
- (h) Ensure that telephone meter readings of guest rooms are accurately taken to raise appropriate charges.
- (i) Coordinate closely with the night auditor for the day's audit.
- (j) Receive the cash sales of all revenue outlets at the end of each shift and keep in safe custody.

❖ **JOB TITLE:- NIGHT AUDITOR**

REPORTS TO:- FRONT OFFICE SUPERVISOR

QUALIFICATION:- Degree or diploma in hotel management.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- (a) Tally all sales summaries of revenue outlets with bills.
- (b) Verify and validate front office cashiers vouchers.
- (c) Check guest folios with charge vouchers.
- (d) Verify front office cashiers reports.
- (e) Prepare statement of accounts above permissible limits.
- (f) Prepare the daily transcripts.
- (g) Audit the night receptionist room report.
- (h) Account for the city ledger credit amounts due.

❖ **JOB TITLE:- CONCIERGE**

REPORTS TO:- LOBBY MANAGER

QUALIFICATION:- Degree or diploma in hotel management.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- (a) Handle all guest mail, information, parcels, and couriers etc as per procedures.
- (b) Answer queries of house facilities and places of tourist interest.
- (c) Keep information aids like time tables, road maps, hotels guide etc.

- (d) Help guests confirm airlines, bus or train tickets.
- (e) Procure box office tickets for cinemas, concerts, special shows etc for the guest.
- (f) Develop contacts with city services to facilitate guest.

❖ **JOB TITLE:- BELL CAPTAIN**

REPORTS TO:- LOBBY MANAGER

QUALIFICATION:- Degree or diploma in hotel management.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- (a) Prepare staff schedules to meet the exigencies of work.
- (b) Set standards of daily briefings and establish effective two way communications.
- (c) Attend to guest complaints and take prompt corrective action.
- (d) Assist bell captain with guest request within policy.
- (e) Oversee the left luggage formalities and the baggage room.
- (f) Set control for the sale of postage stamps to guest.
- (g) Train the bell captain and bell boys for maximum departmental efficiency.
- (h) Assist the security in lobby surveillance.
- (i) Maintain first aid kit as prescribed by the house doctor.
- (j) Step in for lobby manager in his absence.

❖ **JOB TITLE:- BELL BOY**

REPORTS TO:- BELL CAPTAIN

QUALIFICATION:- Diploma in Front Office

Duties and Responsibilities:

- (a) Handle guest arrivals like receive baggage from the porch etc.
- (b) Handle guest departures like bring down guest baggage from the room.
- (c) Handle and store luggage trolleys, wheel chairs etc carefully.
- (d) Report guest with scanty baggage to the bell captain.
- (e) Account for postage stamps sold to guest during the shift.
- (f) Distribute daily newspaper to guest rooms as directed.
- (g) Assist in the transfer of guest baggage in the event of change of rooms.

❖ **JOB TITLE:- TELEPHONE OPERATOR**

REPORTS TO:- FRONT OFFICE MANAGER

QUALIFICATION:- Degree or diploma in hotel management.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- (a) Maintain the telephone equipment and ensure its proper usage.
- (b) Transferring all incoming calls to their respective destination and sometime transferring outgoing calls as well.
- (c) Give wake up calls to guest when requested.
- (d) Update and maintain guest information rack so as to remain aware of the guest name and room number.

- (e) Maintain caller privacy at all times.
- (f) Be responsible for accurate accounting charges of guest in a manual system.

❖ **JOB TITLE:- GUEST RELATION EXECUTIVE**

REPORTS TO:- FRONT OFFICE MANAGER

QUALIFICATION:- Degree or diploma in hotel management.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- (a) Note any special instruction left in the lobby managers log book.
- (b) Check the arrivals and departures of the day especially VIP's.
- (c) Welcome guest as per procedures set by management.
- (d) Offer assistance for any services required by guest.
- (e) Manage all guest complaints and take action appropriately.
- (f) Maintain guest history cards of regular guest and VIP's.
- (g) Assist the scales in familiarization tours of the hotel.
- (h) Coordinates with concerned department to resolve guest needs.
- (i) Assist the security in lobby surveillance.

Review Questions

Q.1 Fill in the blanks:

- (a) Guest history cards are made by _____.
- (b) Wake up calls are given by _____.
- (c) _____ are sold to the guest by bell boy.
- (d) City services are facilitated by _____.
- (e) Up selling of rooms is done by _____.

Q.2 State True or False:

- (a) V.I.P guests are received by G.R.E.
- (b) Scanty baggage is check by door man.
- (c) Theatre tickets are book by concierge for the guest.
- (d) Guest folios are checked by lobby manager.
- (e) Registration is done by receptionist.

Q.3 Answer the following questions:

- Q. 1. Discuss the job profile of front office manager in a hotel.
- Q. 2. Write down the duties and responsibilities of G.R.E and lobby manager.

4.8 Let Us Sum Up

Front office is the nerve center of a hotel. Primary job of front office is to sell rooms, maintain guest account and to work as a single window point of contact for the guests. It comprises of sections like Reservation, Reception, Information, Cashier, Telephone Bell Desk, Concierge and Travel desk.

Staff structure of front office department varies from hotel to hotel as it is based on number of rooms, management policy, extent of automation and multi skilling in the hotel. Staff hierarchy chart of two

different types of hotels is given in this unit for your reference.

Equipments and aids used in front office department include Computer with a property management system and internet, Credit card validator or EDC machine, Fax machine, EPABX and different desks and racks.

Finally, this unit deals with the duties and responsibilities of different staff positions in the front office department along with their respective reporting officers and qualification requirement.

4.9 Practical Activities

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Activity I: | Students in group to draw the front office staff organization chart for a large hotel and medium sized hotel respectively on the chart paper and present it in the practical class room. |
| Activity II: | Teacher to familiarize the students with the different racks and equipments in the practical lab. |
| Activity III: | School should organize a field trip for the students to have a first hand look at the equipments used in hotel for front office department and their usage. |
| Activity IV: | In groups of four each, Students to prepare a presentation on any one section of front office and to present it to rest of the class with the help of chart papers. |
| Activity V: | Each student to impersonate different front office personnel by speaking 2-3 lines of a dialogue about his job profile. Other students of the class should try and recognize whom he is impersonating. |
| Activity VI: | Chart preparation of departmental organization of Hotels. |

UNIT 5

Lobby and Its Layout

Contents

- 5.0 Unit Overview and Description
 - ❖ Overview
 - ❖ Knowledge and Skill Outcomes
 - ❖ Resource Material
 - ❖ Learning Outcomes
 - ❖ Assessment Plan
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Lobby Layout
- 5.3 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.4 Practical Activities

5.0 Unit Overview and Description

Overview:

This unit will provide the student information about the location of a lobby in the hotel, its significance in the hotel and the layout of the hotel lobby.

Knowledge and Skill Outcomes:

- ❖ Location of lobby in the hotel
- ❖ Role of lobby area
- ❖ Layout of lobby

Resource Material:

Hotel Front Office Operations & Management : Jatashankar R. Tiwari
Front Office Operations : Colin Dix, Chris Baird
Front Office Management : Sushil Kumar Bhatnagar
Front Office Management & Operations : Sudhir Andrews
Front Office Operations & Management : Rakesh Puri
Check-in Check-Out Managing Hotel Operations : Gary K. Vallen, Jerome J. Vallen
Principles of Hotel Front-Office Operations : Sue Baker, Jeremy Huyton, Pam Bradley

Learning Outcomes:

| Unit 5: Lobby and its Layout | Outcomes |
|------------------------------|---|
| 5.1 Introduction | General Overview |
| 5.2 Lobby Layout | Student will be able to draw a lobby layout with relative positioning of different sections |

Assessment Plan: (For the Teachers)

| Unit-5 | Topic | Assessment Method | Time Plan | Remarks |
|--------|--------------|------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| 5.1 | Introduction | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 5.2 | Lobby Layout | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |

5.1 Introduction

A hotel lobby is the place where you check into or out of a hotel. It's on the main floor, and usually it's a very open area with many seating places. The focus point of the hotel lobby is the registration desk, behind which a few employees stand. The person who plans to stay at the hotel approaches the desk to make payments, check in, get the keys to their hotel room, and eventually return here to check out and return the keys.

Lobby usually serves as gathering point for guest & their visitors in a hotel first pass through this area, it must be well planned, designed, decorated from inside and outside to give the first impression to the guest.

Features of Lobby:

1. It should be spacious but useful.
2. Natural flow of guest should be towards the reception or information counter on his arrival in the hotel.
3. There should be enough space in lobby for short time keeping of luggage before either sending to room or to the car.
4. The porch sitting should be at least 10 feet high from the road.
5. Lobby should be such as to allow access, the activities in the lobby, entrance, exit etc.
6. Avoid pillars as far as possible they obstructs the view and creates problems in the movement.
7. Various factors such as cost, safety, noise, colour, decor etc should be considered.

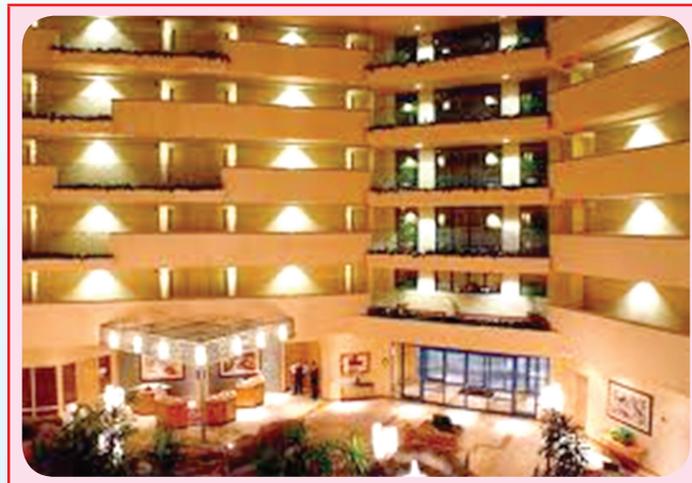


Illustration: Different types of Lobby

Sections of lobby

- ❖ Reception
- ❖ Information Desk
- ❖ Cash and Bills
- ❖ Travel Desk
- ❖ Uniformed Services
 - ✓ Bell Desk
 - ✓ Concierge
- ❖ **Reception**

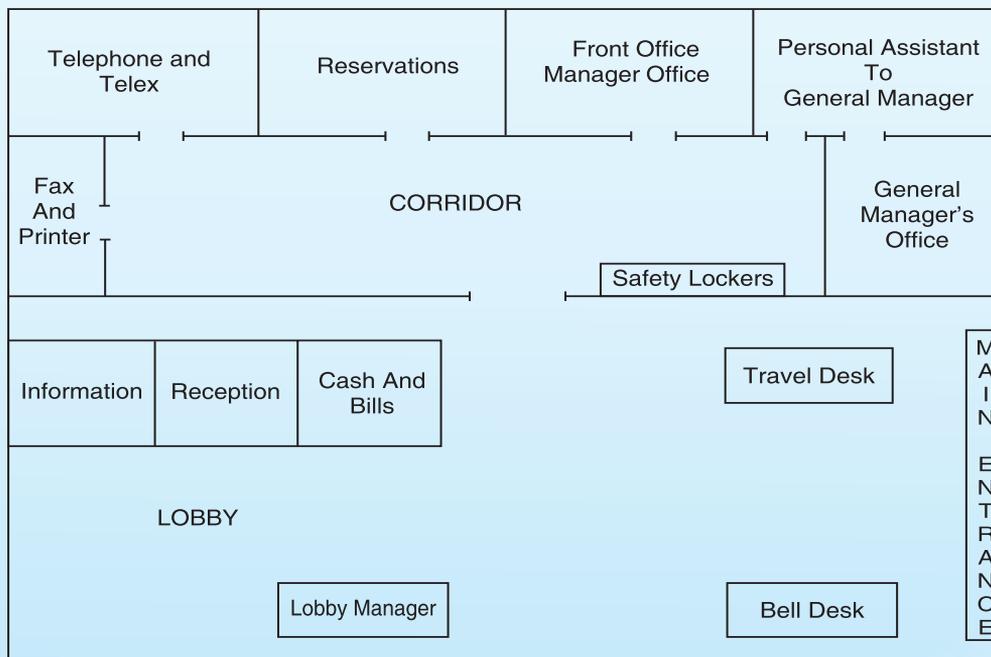
This section of the front office receives and welcomes guests on their arrival in the hotel. The personnel of this section procure all the necessary information about the guest to complete the registration process.

- ❖ **Information desk**
As the name suggests, the information desk provides information to guests. It is manned by an information assistant. In a small hotel, the same function may be performed by the receptionist. The need of a separate information desk is felt in large hotels where the traffic of guests is higher.
- ❖ **Cashier desk**
The cash and bills section records all the monetary transactions of guests. It maintains guest folios and prepares the guest bills to be settled by the guest at the time of departure. This section is headed by a cashier.
- ❖ **Travel desk**
The travel desk takes care of travel arrangements of guests, like air-ticketing, railway reservations, sightseeing tours, airport or railway station pick up or drop, etc. The hotel may operate the travel desk or it may be outsourced to an external travel agency.
- ❖ **Bell desk**
The bell desk is located very close to the main entrance of the hotel. This section is headed by a bell captain, who leads a team of bell boys and page boys.
- ❖ **Concierge**
The concept of concierge came from the days of European royalty. The concierge was the castle doorkeeper in those times. His duty was to ensure that all castle occupants were safe in their rooms at night. A concierge is often expected to achieve the impossible.

Review Question

Q. 1 What are the essential features in the planning of a Hotel lobby ?

5.2 Lobby Layout



Review Questions

- Q. 1. State True or False:
- (a) Lobby should be spacious but useful.
 - (b) Telephone operator is a part of Lobby area.
 - (c) Reservation Manager is in charge of the lobby operations.
 - (d) Bell desk operates from Lobby of a hotel.
 - (e) Interior design is not particularly important for the lobby area.
- Q. 2. Write a short note on the importance of lobby in a hotel.
- Q. 3. Draw a neat diagram of the sample layout of a hotel lobby.

5.3 Let us Sum Up

Lobby creates the first impression of the hotel. This may be considered as the hub of activity in a hotel. All guests enter through a lobby when they are checking-in and also while checking-out. Lobbies are usually designed in an aesthetically appealing manner. The functional areas which are a part of Lobby includes Reception, cashier, Bell Desk, Concierge, Travel Desk etc. Lobby Manager is the manager in charge of this area.

5.4 Practical Activities

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Activity I: | Students to draw the layout of lobby in their chart papers with use of different colour sketch pens to demarcate functional areas of front office department. |
| Activity II : | Students should collect pictures of lobby of different hotels and prepare a collage out of it for display in the practical class room. |
| Activity III : | Students should individually, visit the lobby of a nearby hotel and share their experiences in the class room. |

UNIT 6

Co-ordination of Front Office with other Departments

Contents

- 6.0 Unit Overview and Description
 - ❖ Overview
 - ❖ Knowledge and Skill Outcomes
 - ❖ Resource Material
 - ❖ Learning Outcomes
 - ❖ Assessment Plan
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Advantages of co-ordination Among Departments
- 6.3 Co-ordination of Front Office with Different Departments in the Hotel
- 6.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 6.5 Practical Activities

6.0 Unit Overview and Description

Overview:

This unit will provide information to the student on benefits of co-ordination among different departments in a hotel. The unit gives details of the points of co-ordination of front office department with other departments of the hotel i.e. Marketing and Sales Department, Housekeeping Department, F & B Department (service and Production), Banquet, Maintenance and Engineering, Security and Human Resource Department.

Knowledge and Skill Outcomes:

- ❖ Importance and benefits of proper co-ordination among different departments in the hotel
- ❖ Points of co-ordination of front office department with other major departments in the hotel.

Resource Material:

Hotel Front Office Operations & Management : Jatashankar R. Tiwari
 Front Office Operations : Colin Dix, Chris Baird
 Front Office Management : Sushil Kumar Bhatnagar
 Front Office Management & Operations : Sudhir Andrews
 Front Office Operations & Management : Rakesh Puri
 Check-in Check-Out Managing Hotel Operations : Gary K. Vallen, Jerome J. Vallen
 Principles of Hotel Front-Office Operations : Sue Baker, Jeremy Huyton, Pam Bradley

Learning Outcomes:

| Unit 6: Front Office | Outcomes |
|---|---|
| 6.1 Introduction | General Overview |
| 6.2 Advantages of co-ordination among departments | In this section, you will be able to rationalize the reasons for co-ordination among departments and the advantages thereof. |
| 6.3 Co-ordination of Front office with different departments in the Hotel | You will be able to understand the different points of interface and co-ordination of Front office with various departments of the hotel like Marketing and Sales Department, Housekeeping Department, F&B Department (service and Production), Banquet, maintenance and engineering, Security and Human Resource Department. |

Assessment Plan: (For the Teachers)

| Unit | Topic | Assessment Method | Time Plan | Remarks |
|------|---|------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| 6.1 | Introduction | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 6.2 | Advantages of coordination among departments | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 6.3 | Co-ordination of Front office with different departments in the hotel | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |

6.1 Introduction

Like a player in a football match, the front office alone cannot perform the Hotel business. The front office staff interacts with all departments of the hotel, including marketing and sales, housekeeping, food and beverage, banquet, controller, maintenance, security, and human resources to reach to the desired business results. These departments view the front office as a liaison point of communication in providing guest services. Each of the departments has a unique communication link with the front office staff.

| Review Question |
|--|
| Q. 1 Front office functioning is a team game and not an individual game. Comment ? |



6.2 Advantages of Co-ordination among Departments

- ❖ By the proper co-ordination, level of guest satisfaction increases.
- ❖ It helps in increasing the sale.
- ❖ It reduces burden on staff.
- ❖ Helps in completing departmental objectives.
- ❖ Departments are able to understand the problems of each other.
- ❖ Helps in team-building.
- ❖ Improves the overall efficiency of the hotel.

Review Question

Q. 1 List the advantages of inter departmental co-ordination in a hotel.

6.3 Co-ordination of Front Office with Different Departments in the Hotel

1) Marketing and Sales Department

The marketing and sales department relies on the front office to provide data on guest histories, details concerning each guest's visit. Some of the information gathered is based on pin code, frequency of visits, corporate affiliation, special needs, and reservations for sleeping rooms. It is also the front office's job to make a good first impression on the public, to relay messages, and to meet the requests of guests who are using the hotel for meetings, seminars, and banquets.

The guest history is a valuable resource for marketing and sales, which use the guest registration information to target marketing campaigns, develop promotions, prepare mailing labels, and select appropriate advertising

media. The front office staff must make every effort to keep this database current and accurate.

The process of completing the booking of a special function (such as a wedding reception, convention, or seminar) depends on the availability of rooms for guests. The marketing and sales executives may have to check the lists of available rooms three, six, or even twelve months in the future to be sure that the hotel can accommodate the expected number of guests. A database of available rooms is maintained in the property management system by the front office.

At first guest contacts with the marketing and sales department, usually through the hotel's switch board. A competent switch board operator who is friendly and knowledgeable about hotel operations and personnel will make a good first impression, conveying to the prospective client that this hotel is competent. Messages for the marketing and sales department must be relayed completely, accurately, and quickly.

2) Housekeeping Department



Housekeeping and the front office communicate with each other about housekeeping room status, the report on the availability of the rooms for immediate guest occupancy. Housekeeping room status can be described in the following communication terms:

- ❖ Available Clean or Ready - Room is ready to be occupied
- ❖ Occupied - Guest or guests are already occupying a room
- ❖ Stay over - Guest will not be checking out of a room on the current day
- ❖ Dirty or on - Change - Guest has checked out of the room, but the housekeeping staff has not released the room for occupancy
- ❖ Out - of - order - Room is not available for occupancy because of a mechanical malfunction

Any difference in the occupancy status provided by Housekeeping and in the record front office needs to be sorted out on an immediate basis. This is known as 'discrepancy' and the report containing the details of the same is known as discrepancy report.

House keeping and the front office also communicate on the details of potential house count (a report of the number of guests registered in the hotel), security concerns, and requests for amenities (personal toiletry items such as shampoo, toothpaste, mouthwash, and electrical equipment). These issues are of immediate concern to the guest as well as to supervisors in the hotel.

Reporting of room status is handled on a face-to-face basis in a hotel that does not use a property management

system (PMS). The bi-hourly or hourly visits of the house-keeper to the front desk clerk are a familiar scene in such a hotel. The official reporting of room status at the end of the day is accomplished with a housekeeper's room report (a report prepared by the housekeeper that lists the guest room occupancy status as vacant, occupied, or out-of-order). Sometimes even regular reporting of room status is not adequate, as guests may be anxiously awaiting the opportunity to occupy a room. On these occasions, the front desk clerk will have to telephone the floor supervisor to determine when the servicing of a room will be completed.

The housekeeper relies on the room sales projections- a weekly report prepared and distributed by the front office manager that indicates the number of departures, arrivals, walk-ins, stayovers, and no-shows-to schedule employees. Timely distribution of the room sales projections assists the executive housekeeper in planning employee personal leaves and vacation days.

The front desk also relies on housekeeping personnel to report any unusual circumstances that may indicate a violation of security for the guests. For example, if a maid or houseman notices obviously non-registered guests on a floor, a fire exit that has been propped open, or sounds of a domestic disturbance in a guest room, he or she must report these potential security violations to the front office. The front office staff, in turn, will relay the problem to the proper in-house or civil authority. The front office manager may want to direct the front desk clerks and switch board operators to call floor supervisors on a regular basis to check activity on the guest floors.

Guest requests for additional or special amenities and guest room supplies may be initiated at the front desk. The prompt relay of requests for extra blankets, towels, soap, and shampoo to housekeeping is essential.

3) Food and Beverage Department (service and production)



Communication between the food and beverage department and the front office is also essential. Some of this communication is conveyed by relaying messages and providing accurate information on transfers, which are forms that are used to communicate a charge to a guest account. Communication activities also include reporting predicted house counts, an estimate of the number of guests expected to register based on previous occupancy activities, and processing requests for paid - outs, forms used to indicate the amounts of money paid out of the cashier's drawer on behalf of a guest or an employee of the hotel. These vital services help an overworked food and beverage manager, restaurant manager, or banquet captain meet the demands of the guest.

Incoming messages for the food and beverage manager and executive chef from vendors and other industry representatives are important to the business operation of the food and beverage department. Telephone operator of the front office department is sensitized to understand the importance of these calls and top priority and is accorded to the messages taken for the in case of their non-availability in the office.

In a hotel that has point-of-sale terminals, computerized cash registers that interface with a property management system, information on guest charges is automatically posted to a guest folio, his or her record of charges and payments. When a hotel does not have point - of - sale terminals that interface with PMS point-of-sale terminals, the desk clerk is responsible for posting accurate charges on the guest folio. The front office manager should work with the food and beverage manager in developing standard operating procedures and methods to complete the transfer of charges.

The supervisors in the food and beverage department rely on the predicted house count prepared by the front office manager to schedule employees and predict sales. For example, the restaurant supervisor working the breakfast shift will want to know how many guests will be in the hotel so that he or she can determine how many servers to schedule for breakfast service. Timely and accurate preparation of this communication tool assists in staffing control and sales predictions.

Authorized members of the food and beverage department will occasionally ask the front office for cash, in the form of IOU, to purchase last-minute items for a banquet, the lounge, or the restaurant or to take advantage of other unplanned opportunities to promote hospitality. Specific guidelines concerning cash limits, turn around time, prior approval, authorized signatures, and purchase receipts are developed by the General Manager and Front Office Manager. These guidelines help to maintain control of these paid-outs.

4) Banquet Department

The banquet department, which often combines the functions of a marketing and sales department and a food and beverage department, requires the front office to relay information to guests about scheduled events and bill payment.

The front desk staff may also provide labour to prepare the daily announcement board, an inside listing of the daily activities of the hotel (time, group, and room assignment), and marquee, the curb side message board, which includes the logo of the hotel and space for a message. Since the majority of banquet guests may not be registered guests in the hotel, the front office provides a logical communications center.

The daily posting of scheduled events on a board or an electronic bulletin board provides all guests and employees with information on group events. This service is often handled by front office employees. The preparation of the marquee may include congratulatory, welcome, sales promotion, or other important messages. In some hotels, an employee in the front office contacts the marketing and sales department for the message.

The banquet guest who is unfamiliar with the hotel property will ask at the front office for directions. This service might seem minor in the overall delivery of service, but it is essential to the lost or confused guest. The front office staff must know both how to direct guests to particular meeting rooms or reception areas and which functions are being held in which rooms.

The person responsible for paying the bills for a special event will also find his or her way to the front office to settle the city ledger accounts (accounts of those guests who are not inhouse).

5) Accounts

The accounts or controller relies on the front office staff to provide a daily summary of financial transactions

through a well-prepared night audit report. This information is also used to measure management ability to meet budget targets. Since the front office provides the controller with financial data for billing and maintenance of ledgers, these two departments must relay payments and charges through the posting machine or property management system.

6) Maintenance or Engineering Department

The maintenance or engineering department and front office communicate on room status and requests for maintenance service. Maintenance employees must know the occupancy status of a room before attending to plumbing, heating, or air-conditioning problems. If the room is reserved, the two departments will work out a time frame so the guest will be able to enter the room or be assigned to another room. Cooperative efforts produce the best solutions to sometimes seemingly impossible situations. Likewise, the requests from guests for the repair of heating, ventilating, air-conditioning units, plumbing, televisions and other room furnishings are directed to the front desk. These requests are then communicated to the maintenance department. The front desk clerk must keep track of the repair schedule, as guests want to be informed of when the repair will be made.

7) Security Department



Communications between the security department and the front office are very important in providing hospitality to the guest. These departments work together very closely in maintaining guest security. Fire safety measures and emergency communication systems as well as procedures for routine investigation of guest security concerns require the cooperation of these departments.

8) Human Resources Management Department

The recruitment, induction, training, appraisals and promotion of front office employees as well as all their personnel matters are handled by HR department of a hotel.

The human resources management department may rely on the front office staff to act as an initial point of contact for potential employees in all departments. Some managers of human resources management depend on the front office to distribute application forms and other personnel-related information to job applicants. The potential employee may ask for directions to the personnel office at the front desk.

Review Questions

Q.1 Match the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| I. Housekeeping | (a) Bulletin Board |
| II. Accounts | (b) Repair Schedule |
| III. Maintenance | (c) Guest History |
| IV. Sales & Marketing | (d) Room Discrepancy |
| V. Banquets | (e) Night Audit Report |

Q.2 Fill in the blanks:

1. Recruitment and promotion of front office employees is done by _____ department.
2. _____ is a room which is not available due to mechanical malfunctioning.
3. Daily summary of _____ is provided by front office department to accounts department.

Q.3 Answer the following questions:

- Q. 1. Success of a hotel depends upon the close team work among its different departments. Elaborate?
- Q. 2. Write a note on interdepartmental coordination between Housekeeping and front office department.

6.4 Let us Sum Up

Hotel is a business unit in which several departments work in close coordination to create a great experience for the guest. Front office department cannot work in isolation as its nature of work is such that it is dependent on all other departments to closely co-ordinate and communicate with it. Housekeeping prepares the rooms which are sold by Front office. They closely coordinate with each other regarding the status of rooms. Food and Beverage is dependent upon front office for promotion of its product and for information regarding business forecast to plan their activities. Sales and marketing thrives on the basis of information, database and feedback given by front office to them. Security and Accounts also has close functional relationship with the front office department.

6.5 Practical Activities

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Activity I: | Students to perform a role play highlighting the coordination among different departments of the hotel. Role play to be followed by a discussion on the topic. |
| Activity II: | A group of students to enact the role-play of morning meeting of the executives of the hotel and highlight the co-ordination among them for efficient functioning of the hotel. |

Activity I – Role play, Work-sheet

Co- ordination of Front Office with Housekeeping:-

FOA calling to HK department.

H K Supervisor : Good Morning, Housekeeping, Naresh, House keeping control desk, How may I help you

FOA : Good morning Naresh, this is Sheetal from Front office. I want to bring an observation to your notice. When we tallied our room status report with house keeping room status report, we found some discrepancy in that

H K Supervisor : OK, What is that?

F O A : There is a discrepancy of one room which is shown out of order in our list and is shown vacant in your report .

H K Supervisor : Let me check once again. Please hold the line.

HK Supervisor : Thank you for holding Sheetal , Actually I got the report through log book that AC problem of Room no - 302 was mended last night. So, this room is now ready to sell. Kindly correct in your report. I will send a mail as well. I regret the communication gap.

FOA : Thank you so much for your co- operation .

Activity II – Role play, Work-sheet

Scene: Manager's Meeting. Time - 09:30 am. Venue - G M Office.
(All the managers of different departments take their chair)

G M : Good morning everybody? How are you?

All managers : Good morning, sir. We are fine.

G M : Let us start with our meeting today. First discuss about problems we faced last day. We shall start with FRONT OFFICE. How was the guest feedback yesterday?

- F.O. manager :** Sir most of the guests were quite happy. They were happy about food but had complaint about the restaurant cleaning.
- G M :** Let us refer this problem to F & B Manager .
- F& B Manager :** Thank you for information which was noticed by the guest and I take it as an opportunity but actually this was the place where detailed cleaning was required and I think Executive housekeeper can better guide us in this problem.
- Ex. House keeper :** Sir, we had problem with our 'cleaning equipment' which we use to clean tiles during night shifts complaint has been lodged with maintenance department.
- G M :** OK, Mr. Kaushal (Maintenance head). What is the status of the machine today.
- Maintenance head :** Sir, this machine comes under PM preventive maintenance). So, the company person will come by 11:00 am today and he will mend it today itself. There is no alternate available so, could not provide the replacement.
- G M :** OK. So, Mrs. Mehta (Ex. Housekeeper). How was the day yesterday, anything which you want to bring in our notice.
- Ex. House keeper :** Yes sir, thank you. I have problem with staffing. My department is in scarcity of employees at lower level, there is high turn over of employees believe our HR & Training department can help us in this issue.
- (G M looked towards the HR manager)
- HRM :** Thank you Mrs. Mehta. My team will work to hire some more employees for housekeeping. Kindly forward your manpower needs at different levels. So that we can work upon it. To control high turnover of employees I am doing Exit Interviews too. Hope we will come up with better results.
- GM :** Hope you all are satisfied with HR manager's answer.
- (All nodded affirmatively)
- GM :** Any other point that any one wants to bring to our notice?
- F&B Manager :** Sir, we have a booking of banquet party of 300 guest tomorrow. Though every department is informed but my special request is with security officer. Please do your staffing as we may desire adequate staff as we are serving them cocktails in that party.
- Security officer :** Ok sir, I have staffed accordingly and briefed my department employees.
- F& B Manager :** Thank you.
- GM :** I hope all the major issues have been discussed. My special agenda for tomorrow is to discuss how to improve our sales. I require some details what our Sales and Marketing is doing at it and what we should do in future. Suggestions from all department heads are invited. Thank you wish you a very happy business. Thank you.
- All Managers :** Thank you sir.

UNIT 7

Safety and Security

Contents:

- 7.0 Unit Overview and Description
 - ❖ Overview
 - ❖ Knowledge and skill outcomes
 - ❖ Resource Material
 - ❖ Learning Outcomes
 - ❖ Assessment Plan
- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Developing the Security Programme
- 7.3 Security for Guests
- 7.4 Security of Hotels
- 7.5 Emergency Procedures
- 7.6 Communication and Records
- 7.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 7.8 Practical Activities

7.0 Unit Overview and Description

Overview:

This unit provides an in depth view of the importance of developing a proper security program for a hotel. The unit details separately the security requirements of a guest and that of a hotel. In a separate section various emergency situations and the standard responses are detailed.

Knowledge and Skill Outcomes:

- ❖ Importance and benefits of developing a security program for the hotel and for the guests.
- ❖ Various emergency situations and standard responses.
- ❖ Communication and records required for the security apparatus of the hotel for efficient functioning.

Resource Material:

Hotel Front Office Operations & Management : Jatashankar R. Tiwari

Front Office Operations : Colin Dix, Chris Baird

Front Office Management : Sushil Kumar Bhatnagar

Front Office Management & Operations : Sudhir Andrews

Front Office Operations & Management : Rakesh Puri

Check-in Check-Out Managing Hotel Operations : Gary K. Vallen, Jerome J. Vallen

Principles of Hotel Front-Office Operations : Sue Baker, Jeremy Huyton, Pam Bradley

Learning Outcomes:

| Unit 7: Safety and Security | Outcomes |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 7.1 Introduction | General Overview |
| 7.2 Developing the Security Programme | The student will understand the importance of having a security program and the process of developing it. |
| 7.3 Security for guests | The student will be able to know the security requirements of a guest and the approach hotels use to fulfill them. |
| 7.4 Security of Hotels | The student will know the security threats to the hotel and the ways to handle them |
| 7.5 Emergency Procedures | The student will understand the standard operating procedures in case of different emergency situations faced by the hotel. |
| 7.6 Communication and Records | The student will get information about the communication devices and the type of records used in security program of the hotel. |

Assessment Plan: (For the Teachers)

| Unit-1 | Topic | Assessment Method | Time Plan | Remarks |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 7.1 | Introduction | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 7.2 | Developing the Security Programme | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 7.3 | Security for guests | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 7.4 | Security of Hotels | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 7.5 | Emergency Procedures | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 7.6 | Communication and Records | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |

7.1 Introduction

Lodging property managers have many responsibilities, one of which is security. From the earliest days of the hospitality industry, one of the most important duties of an innkeeper has been to protect guests from any harm to his life or property. Although interpretations of protection may vary from country to country, every legal jurisdiction imposes some form of security obligations on hotels. Security regulations go beyond the innkeeper-guest relationship to include hotel employees and others on the properties who are not guests. Therefore, providing security in a hotel is the broad task of protecting people, be it the guests, employees, and others and assets. It must be stated, however, that each lodging property is different and has different security needs.



Review Question

Q. 1 Providing safety and security to guests is one of the foremost duties of a hotel's management. Comment ?

7.2 Developing the Security Programme

Lodging property security efforts may involve such areas of concern as guestroom and security, key control, locks, access control, perimeter control, alarm systems, communication systems, lightning, closed circuit televisions, safe deposit boxes, inventory control, credit and billing procedures, computer security, Staffing, pre-employment screening, employee training, responsible service of alcoholic beverages, emergency procedures, safety procedures, record keeping, and more.

The industry's concern with the security has increased greatly since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 in USA. Hotels, because they are so open to the public, are potential targets for terrorist activities. For example, immediately after the tragic events of 9/11, hotels in New York and Washington,

D.C., received dozens of bomb threats, including threats to use poisonous gas and other types of destructive devices. More recently, two prominent hotels were among the targets of the terrorist attacks in Mumbai, on 26/11/2008.

A lodging property security programme should stress the prevention of security problems. It is far more desirable to keep security incidents from occurring than to catch a criminal after crime has been committed. Certain security actions and procedures may help to prevent or discourage incidents.

Each property should continually review its security procedures and update them to meet changing security levels. The following list indicates general areas that might be part of a properties security programme:

- ❖ Doors, locks, key control, and access control
- ❖ Guestroom security
- ❖ Control of persons on premises
- ❖ Perimeter and grounds control
- ❖ Protection of assets
- ❖ Emergency procedures
- ❖ Communications
- ❖ Security records
- ❖ Staff security procedures

Review Questions

- Q. 1 List the General Areas that form a part of a hotel property's security programme.
- Q. 2 Prevention of security problems is better than its cure. Explain in 3-4 lines.

7.3 Security for Guests

A. Doors, locks, key control, and access control



During a grand opening, a hotel traditionally throws out the keys to the front door. This symbolizes that everyone is welcome. Yet the symbolism doesn't preclude the need to provide access control to all parts of the building and grounds. When most people think of access control, they first think of guestroom access, but there are hotels areas that require security control, including offices, pool and fitness center, meeting rooms and lockers, and other areas, for example, locking hotel storerooms help prevent hotel employees from unauthorized entry and from stealing hotel property, whether it is food, linen, or other supplies.

Locking fitness center and pools helps prevent guests, visitors and employees from using the facilities when they cannot be properly supervised.

Guest room access security is the most common security need. Electronic guest room locks have greater flexibility compared to manual systems. Different systems can record every authorized and every unauthorized entry attempt. If a guest reports a robbery, the person responsible for hotel security can query the guest room lock and identify the keys that were in the last 10, 20, 30 or 50 entries. For guests, security is enhanced because new key codes are issued each time a guest check in. Keys are issued during the check in process, and usually will work only for a limited time period- for example, the issued key is good until noon on the scheduled date of departure. If the guest decides to extend the stay, the key must be recorded. Similarly, the guest departs a day early; the key can be rendered invalid by checking in another guest in the room.

For employees, guest room keys are coded by department, and also have time limits on them. For eg., hotel maintenance employee may be given a temporary guestroom key to fix a problem in a guestroom. The key may be good for a specific time period, such as between 10 A.M and 11 A.M. If more time is needed, the key must be recorded.

Guest room doors locks also may include chains or other backup locks on the inside of the door, so that they provide guests with good security. Balcony and patio locks may include not only the lock on the door, but also an extra lock that is controlled from the inside of the room. When connecting rooms are not needed, it is important that the connecting door be closed and locked. Only hotel employees should have the keys to open those doors.

Most hotels have multiple key-security levels. The lowest level is the individual guest room, office, store room, or meeting room. The next level is often called a "section master" key. Section master keys are generally used in housekeeping when a room attendant is assigned a specific group of rooms to clean or inspect; he or she can carry one section master key instead of carrying many separate guest room keys. A floor master key is generally the next level up; it provides access to an entire floor. There can be several buildings master keys. One building master can cover the guest room section of the building, including all storage closets in that part of the building. Another building master can cover all public areas, such as dining and meetings rooms. A grand master key gives access to all doors locks in the building. An emergency key or "E-key" is an emergency override key that allows access to all rooms, even if they have been locked from the inside.

All the lodging property's keys, no matter what level they are, should have control on them. Guest room keys are recorded every time new guests checks in or change their departure date. Other keys do not need to be changed as often, but still need to be controlled. Section master keys and floor

master keys should be issued at every shift. If a key is lost or stolen; it must be reported immediately and appropriate actions should be taken to invalidate that key.



B. Guestroom Security

The guest room security extends beyond the guestrooms door locks. Another security device found on guest room doors is the peephole. Peepholes usually contain a fish-eye lens that allows guests to see to the left and right when looking out. Peepholes are usually placed conveniently in the door for guests of average height. In rooms that are specially designed for differently able people , a second peephole is provided for guest in wheel chairs to see all areas of the hall.

Telephones are also an important part of guest room security, as they allow guest to call for help whenever necessary. Clear instructions, such as “Dial 0 for emergencies” should be on or near every guest room telephone.

C. Safe Deposit



Though hotel is not responsible for the guest valuables, the rule to this effect is written in the guest registration card and also notified in the guest room but a hotel offers a free safe deposit facility for his valuables.

Hotels have bank type of lockers installed at the front office cash. A locker is allotted to guest that can be opened by using two keys .The master key is with the front office cashier and other key is issued to the guest.

A contract is also signed in between the guest and the hotel. Whenever a guest wants to open his locker it has to be entered into the locker operating register. Signatures are always verified with the specimen. Head cashier inserts his key then a guest inserts his own key, and then only a lock can be opened. Guest is left alone to operate his locker. If the key is lost by the guest, then the locker will be drilled open in presence of the guest and can be charged for the replacement of the locker.

These days some hotels have installed electronic safe deposit boxes in each guest room. This safety box can be operated by using an electronic number. Guest can use any number to open the lock. The number selected by the guest becomes the locker's code number. The guests are advised to keep their valuables in the electronic safety box. Though hotel is not responsible for any lost item. But hotels take this issue as prestige issue so an inquiry is done on the hotel security level.

Review Questions

Q.1 True or False :

- (a) Manual locks have greater flexibility compared to electronic ones.
- (b) A grand master key gives access to all door locks in the building.
- (c) Safe deposit lockers allotted to guests are opened with the use of a single key which remains with the cashier.
- (d) In a room for differently abled people, two peep holes are provided.

7.4 Security of hotels



(a) Control of Persons on Premises

Controlling people on the premises is one of the most difficult issues for hotel managers and security personnel. Hotels are private property, so people can be excluded if they have no specific reason for being on the premises. It is in these situations where training the hotel staff in security issues is so important. Surveillance systems use video cameras, motion detectors, and other security devices to monitor hotel areas. Cameras are usually connected to monitor in the security offices, Front desk, telephone dept., or other areas where there is generally someone to watch them. Motion detectors and other forms of passive security can set off alarms. Some hotels have signs posted stating that they are private property.

(b) Perimeter and Grounds Control

Perimeter and grounds control can take many forms. Surveillance systems are very useful in providing security monitoring of such outdoors areas as parking lots, pools, tennis courts, and other areas. Parking lots should be well-lit; guests and employees feel safer in well-lighted parking lots or structures. Parking facilities may also have gates to control traffic; sometimes these gates are staffed for extra protection. Fences are often needed, especially in high risk areas. The hotels management should train valet parking attendants, landscape staff members, maintenance staff members, and other to watch for unauthorized people on the grounds.

(c) Protection of Assets

The physical and intellectual assets of the hotel must be protected as well. Important devices for securing the assets of guests are hotel safe deposit boxes and, for those hotels that offer them, in room safes. Hotels provide some sort of safe deposit box facility for guests at no charge. Guests must be noticed of the availability of these boxes, usually through notices in guest rooms.

There may be more than one safe for hotel use. When a deposit is made into the safe, the amount, the date, time, revenue outlet, and name require someone other than the person responsible for the drop was actually envelopes found in the safe as the first step in ensuring that the contents are accurate. Both general hotel safes and drop safes are fire-rated to protect the contents from fire.

Hotels must also protect the assets of employees. Employee changing and locker rooms should be secure and safe. Many hotels provide locks for employees. When employees arrive for work, they require a uniform and a lock for the locker where they can store their personal valuables, other hotels use a more flexible system, involving a lockable bag that holds employee clothing and other items. The bag is turned into a secure area after it is filled, and it is claimed at the end of the employee's shift.

Review Questions

Q.1 State whether True or False:

- (a) Protecting employees and their assets is also a part of hotels security programme.
- (b) Safety locker installed at the front office for guest use is operated using one key.
- (c) A floor master key gives access to all door locks in the hotel.

Q.2 Fill in the blanks:

- (i) Terrorist attack of _____ in USA has greatly increased the Security concerns of hotels.
- (ii) In a hotel right of admission is _____
- (iii) _____ Keys are more secure compared to Manual keys.

Q.3 Answer the following questions:

- Q. 1. Explain how security system is important in guest security.
- Q. 2. Proper control of Keys is important for strong hotel administration. Discuss?
- Q. 3. 26/11 has alarmed the security system of not only country but of a hotel? What could be the precautions (equipments and systems) which could have helped the administration to avoid that incident?

7.5 Emergency Procedures

Sooner or later, every hotel will have some sort of emergency to deal with Injuries, Robberies, Destruction of Assets, Fires, or Other Emergency situations will require extraordinary action on the part of the hotel staff. The hotel should have well documented procedures for all emergencies that can be anticipated. These procedures should be included in the initial and ongoing employee training program. Front desk employees must know what to do during a robbery or when a guest calls asking for medical assistance. Hotel staff members working at hotels located in earth quake, hurricane or flood-prone areas needs to know what to do when these emergencies occur.

One of the most important emergency procedures is to assist guests with disabilities during an emergency. Most hotels computer systems have special codes in them for identifying where guests with disabilities have been roomed. If a hotel is being evacuated, employees must go to these guest rooms to assist the disabled guest.

Regulation requires guests to be notified in their guest rooms of emergency exits and procedures. Most service hotels have bell attendants provide a brief emergency orientation while escorting guests to their rooms. Evacuation routes are generally posted in guest rooms, often on the back of the main guest room door.



Emergency Procedures & Situation Handling:-

(a) Lost and Found

This is a term used in hotel parlance to refer to any item which is left by the guest or temporarily misplaced by the guest but traced later by the hotel staff. Such articles to be handed over to the housekeeping department which maintained a special locker for this purpose. If the item belongs to the guest who has already checked out, then a letter has to be sent to the forwarding address left by the guest while check out or which is there in the registration card. If no reply is received by the hotel within certain time limit, it may be auctioned to the hotel employees as per the hotel rules.

If the lost belongings are found in the public areas and the guest is still residing in the hotel then

housekeeping department keeps those items with them till any complain is made at the front office or in the lobby, in this case guest is required to give a description of the article which is lost, before that item is shown to him.

(b) Fire in the hotel

As soon the fire is detected and intimated to the front desk ,the first thing to do is to inform the telephone department. In most hotels the telephone department plays a pivotal role of alarming the hotel. In smaller hotel which have telephone department is merged with the front office, there the first job is to call the fire department of that city for the help. The front office should alert all guest and inform them to use the staircase and not the elevator. The telephone exchange should always be manned during fire to communicate from one point to another. If the front office staff have to get actively involved in the procedure then they should search each room thoroughly, specially under bed or in closets or bathrooms to ensure that no guest is left behind. They must guide the guest through the fire exit map and help in extinguishing the fire by the use of appropriate fire extinguishers i.e. Foam for electrical fires and oil fires, water for the general fires and so on.



(c) Death

The front office should inform the General Manager, the Security Officer and call for the hotel doctor, no alarm is raised and none of the guest to be informed .The General Manager may decide to call the police. The room to be sealed till police formalities are over. People known to that person are to be contacted through the addresses entered in the registration card.

(d) Accidents

The house doctor should be called immediately on phone and informed about the nature of the accident and guest's condition. The doctor's instructions must be followed immediately. Bleeding must be stopped by swabbing wounds with cotton wool and applying antiseptic or any lotion. If

a fracture is suspected the guest is not moved till the doctor arrives. Burns are to be treated with creams meant for the purpose and water is never poured over the burns as this will surely lead to the blisters. Hotel should train staff for this purpose.

(e) Vandalism

The front office staff must call the hotel security and order the main door to be locked. If things get out of hand police must be called.

(f) Damage to property by the Resident Guest

The front office cashier is instructed to raise a charge for the value of the damages to property, a responsible guest will never argue but if he does the subject is to be referred to the General Manager.

(g) Drunken Guest

It is prudent to never argue with a drunken guest. He must be politely led away from the public areas either into an office or in his room. If he is behaving unruly the security may be called.

(h) Theft

Hotels often adopt certain precautions to avoid thefts, they include

- ❖ Self-locking room doors.
- ❖ Safety deposit boxes for guest valuables.
- ❖ Watching guests with light baggage who could become potential skippers.
- ❖ Watching a walk-in who can be a thief.
- ❖ Avoiding giving room numbers to visitors or guest names to telephone callers.
- ❖ Install CCTV devices in all corridors.
- ❖ Strictly controlling the master key.
- ❖ Posting security personals on floor.
- ❖ Keeping all entrances, corridors and staircases well illuminated.
- ❖ Reporting immediately any suspicious characters.

(i) Bomb Threats

With the increase in terrorism in the country and world, the bomb threats are not so uncommon these days. This may be a genuine threat with explosive planted somewhere in the hotel or it may be a hoax whichever the case may be such threats are always taken seriously and the proper action taken.

Mostly bomb threats which are made on phone are attended by either the telephone operator or the receptionist of the hotel in the following steps to be followed:-

- ❖ Signal the colleague to also listen in the call and try to find out the location through exchange.
- ❖ Listen the caller carefully and make it prolong and get all the information carefully- place where planted, time of explosion and strength of explosives.
- ❖ If possible this call may be taped and note the background noise and try to catch information from accent and police to be informed.
- ❖ Immediately after disconnection the G M and Security Officer has to be informed.
- ❖ If the location is identified the department head should be also informed
- ❖ People from that suspected area have to be evacuated from that particular location.
- ❖ After "all clear" signal from the police the normal process of hotel can be continued.

Review Question

- Q.1 What are the steps to follow in the following cases :
 a) Bomb threat b) Theft c) Death

7.6 Communications and Records

Good communication forms the backbone of any successful security program. Providing mobile communication devices, such as radios and pagers, to employees is one way to ensure good communication. The strategy is to post security information in high-traffic employee's areas to help keep high security awareness at the hotel. Security should be a frequent topic of discussion for departmental and staff meetings. In addition, the hotel should regularly publish security information. Employees should be given very specific instructions on what to do when they identify a possible security problem.

Just as important, all hotel staff members should receive on how to communicate to guests and other people during an emergency. Dealing with the public at large is just as important. When the news media becomes aware of a hotel emergency, they will attempt to contact the hotel for comment. Every employee should be aware of the hotels policy concerning media contact and why compliance with the policy is so important.

Security Records

Any activity that has security- related dimension to it be recorded for future reference. Reports about robberies, assaults, personal injuries to guest or employees, and property damage or theft, vehicle maintenance records, and preventive maintenance records all should be part of a security record programme.

Security records are important for several reasons: First, they allow hotel management to track issues, Vehicle maintenance records allow hotel to track maintenance issues, such as tire wear. Most municipalities mandate periodic testing of the fire alarm system and recordings of the results.

Finally, security records may assist the hotel with insurance claims made by either the hotel or the guest. In either case security records can present the hotel's view of what happened. This is especially helpful when hotel staff members are called upon to describe a security incident that occurred many months ago.

Review Questions

Q.1 Match the following:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| (1) Bomb Threat | (a) Don't Argue |
| (2) Vandalism | (b) House Doctor |
| (3) Illness | (c) Prolong the Call |
| (4) Drunken Guest | (d) CCTV |
| (5) Theft | (e) Close the door |

Q.2 Answer the following questions:

Q. 1. Discuss in brief the standard operating procedure in case of the following?
 (a) Vandalism (b) Fire

Q. 2. What is the importance of communication and records in a hotel's security system?

7.7 Let us Sum Up

Providing security to guests and their property is not only the moral responsibility of the hotel but is also binding upon them, by law, to follow specific safety regulations. Hotels have a structured security program where emphasis is on security needs of the guests and their property. Electronic keys for the guest rooms and in-room electronic safety lockers for the guests have greatly helped in addressing security concerns.

Hotels develop a standard operating procedure to handle emergency situations. Bomb-threat, Fire, Death, Illness, Drunk guest etc. are the situations that concern the hotel management and efficient handling of all such emergencies is a part of the front office department profile.

Documentation of all security procedures is important for the hotel as it's a part of the security records. These records are useful for any insurance claim, court cases and to absolve the hotel in case of an undue claim by a guest.

7.8 Practical Activities

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Activity I: | Students should visit a nearby hotel and have a look at the equipment used for security purpose such as Metal detector, Fire alarm, smoke detector, CCTV, safety locker, etc. |
| Activity II: | Fire fighting demonstration by an expert for all the students. |
| Activity III: | First aid demonstration/training for all the students by an expert. |
| Activity IV: | Teacher to divide the students in groups. Each group to plan and act a role play on the handling of following emergency situations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Handling Guest Illness. (b) Handling a Bomb Threat. (c) Handling a Drunk Guest. |

Role Play I : Handling Guest Illness in Hotel

As hotel is a home away from home we must ensure that attention and proper care by staff and medical treatment by hotel prescribed doctors can be provided.

Situation handling role plays by 4 students (One as a Guest, Another Student as a Receptionist, One as a Doctor and Another one as Bell boy).

(Guest approaches reception counter)

Receptionist : Good evening sir. How may I assist you?

Guest : Madam, I am having fever and headache since afternoon.

Receptionist : Oh, I am extremely sorry sir. Can you wait for a minute. Meanwhile she gets the thermometer to check the temperature. Sir you are having 102 degree fever. I think we may call a Doctor to assist you.

- Guest :** Yes , sure. You can call the doctor.
(Receptionist makes call to the hotel doctor to attend to the guest immediately.)
- Receptionist :** Sir, I have informed about your health problem, our hotel doctor will visit you in the room. May I order hot coffee for you.
- Guest :** That will be fine. You can send the coffee to my room.
(Receptionist calls room service saying that room no 124 guest Mr. Suresh should be served with a cup of coffee immediately as he is not well.)
- Doctor :** (Visit the guest and analyse the health problem) don't you worry. It is just a viral fever. I am giving some medicine for you for three days and you will be perfectly fine.
- Doctor :** To the receptionist you make arrangements to get these medicines from the medical store.
- Receptionist :** Calls the bell boy to go out and get the medicine for the guest. Calls the guest over phone saying that sir, I have sent our hotel staff to get the medicine for you and i hope the coffee is served to you.
(Bell boy comes to the receptionist with medicines and Doctor's prescription.)
- Receptionist :** You hand over the medicine to guest Mr. Suresh room no 124.
(Bell boy knocks the door gently by announcing 'Bell Boy Sir'.)
- Guest :** Opens the door. The bell boy handover the medicine along with doctor's prescription.)
- Bell boy:** Get well soon sir and he leave the room.
- Receptionist :** (After an hour she calls the guest) Sir, how are you feeling now?
- Guest :** Much better. I am thankful for your prompt response. I really appreciate your work.
- Receptionist :** Most welcome sir; in fact it is our honour to serve you. Have a good day sir.

Role Play II Worksheet: Bomb Threat

Bomb threats are usually received orally on telephone by hotel's telephone operator. It should be handled in the following way:

- Telephone Operator :** "Good evening! Hotel Moon. How may I help you?"
- caller:** "A bomb has been planted in your hotel."
- Telephone Operator :** "May I know to whom I am speaking?"
(she indicates the other employee to record it)

- Caller:** “You won’t be able to know it. The bomb planted in your hotel will blast in 4 hours from now. If you want your hotel and the people over there to be safe, you will have to fulfill our demands.”
(The employee should remain observant and calm. He/she is hearing sound bells of temple in the background. He/ She should try listening to the person more and ask questions to keep him connected.)
- Telephone Operator :** “Where is the bomb located?”
(Recognizing his voice as of a south Indian)
- Person:** “You and your people will never find out.”
- Telephone Operator :** “What is your reason for planting this bomb?”
- Person:** “Because we want our needs to be fulfilled. Do not dare to inform the police because they will also be of no help.”
- Telephone Operator :** “Where are you calling from?”
- Person:** “You will not find this also. Wait for my next call and I will tell you all my demands. You better fulfill them or the results will be disastrous.”

(Call gets disconnected)

- ❖ After the call gets disconnected, the Front Office Manager should be informed.
- ❖ All the department heads and General Manager should gather at one place and discuss the matter.
- ❖ The Police should be informed and they should investigate the threat.
- ❖ If the telephone operator has heard anything during the call that can be of any help, it should be informed to the police. All details such as the voice of the person, background noise etc. should be told.
- ❖ One staff member should guide the police and other teams to the hotel for searching the bomb.
- ❖ If a suspicious object is found, the hotel should be evacuated and make sure all doors and windows are open.

Role Play III Worksheet: Handling a Drunk Guest

Handling a drunken guest in the hotel seems to be a very easy task in listening but in itself is a very difficult task and handling a guest who is drunk and completely out of his senses is very tough.

Certain attributes you have to possess:

- ❖ Act politely.
- ❖ Never argue.
- ❖ Talk softly and lead him away from the public area.
- ❖ If the drunken guest is behaving rudely then the last option should be to call the security officer but try and handle the situation very calmly.

The conversation below will give the fair idea of handling this kind of situation which may be very common in hotels.

- Receptionist:** “Good evening sir, how may I assist you?”
- Guest:** “I want my room to be changed and should be on the other floor.”
- Receptionist:** “Sir, please may I know the reason for your room change.”
- Guest:** “There is no specific reason but I am just ordering you to change my room as you are here for my assistance.”
- Receptionist:** “I am very sorry to say so but sir without any specific reason our room cannot be changed and right now we also don’t have any room available because we are running on 100% occupancy. My sincere apologies to you sir.”
- Guest:** “How dare you talk to me like that, just call your manager I will talk to him. You bloody don’t know who I am. I will surely change the room and you all are here for me only just do as I say.

Note: Here the duty manager or the immediate supervisor should take the drunken guest away from the reception/front desk area and make the guest realize that this is not the right way to talk and then acting very calmly and talking very politely with him the supervisor can escort him to his room or he can indulge the guest in some other thoughts and just keep the guest calm and as soon as possible send him back to his room.

Role Play IV Worksheet: Handling a Drunk Guest (B)

Scene: A Guest at 11:30 P.M. at Front Office.

- Guest:** Hello good evening. I want a martini right now.
- F.O.A (Lady):** Good evening sir, the bar is closed, I will request to the F&B service. Please go to your room sir, your drink will be sent to your room.
- Guest:** No, I will have it in this lobby, I like this lobby and “you as well”
- F.O.A (Lady):** Sorry sir , you are crossing your limits. Please go to your room.
(The guest was constantly insisting on remaining there, FOA calls up a male colleague for help)
- F.O.A (Male):** Excuse me sir, let me escort you to your room, the other guests are getting uncomfortable.
- Guest :** To hell with others , I have paid , I am paying , I will pay , I am “The guest”
(Finally the security officer is called, guest attacks him, the situation gets uncontrolled and later police was called up by security)

UNIT 8

Reservation

Contents

- 8.0 Unit Overview and Description
 - ❖ Overview
 - ❖ Knowledge and skill outcomes
 - ❖ Resource Material
 - ❖ Learning Outcomes
 - ❖ Assessment Plan
- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Importance of Reservation
- 8.3 Modes and Sources of Reservation
- 8.4 Types of Reservation
- 8.5 Systems of Reservation
- 8.6 Process of Reservation
- 8.7 Group Reservation
- 8.8 Cancellation and Revision
- 8.9 Selective Overbooking
- 8.10 Reservation Reports
- 8.11 Let Us Sum Up
- 8.12 Practical Activities

8.0 Unit Overview and Description

Overview:

This unit deals with an important operational aspect of front office, i.e. advance booking of rooms. It starts with establishing the importance of reservation for the guest and for the hotel. Subsequently it details the modes and sources of reservation and the procedural aspects of handling a reservation.

Knowledge and Skill Outcomes:

- ❖ Importance of reservation for the guest and the hotel.
- ❖ Listing and explanation of modes and sources of reservation.
- ❖ Students will be provided necessary knowledge and skill to handle a reservation request.
- ❖ Understanding of the processes involved in Cancellation & Revision of a Reservation and Group Reservation.

Resource material:

Hotel Front Office Operations & Management : Jatashankar R. Tiwari

Front Office Operations : Colin Dix, Chris Baird

Front Office Management : Sushil Kumar Bhatnagar

Front Office Management & Operations : Sudhir Andrews

Front Office Operations & Management : Rakesh Puri

Check-in Check-Out Managing Hotel Operations : Gary K. Vallen, Jerome J. Vallen

Principles of Hotel Front-Office Operations : Sue Baker, Jeremy Huyton, Pam Bradley

Learning Outcomes:

| Unit 8: Reservation | Outcomes |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 8.1 Introduction | General Overview |
| 8.2 Importance of Reservation | The student will be able to understand the importance of reservation from a guest's perspective and from hotel's perspective. |
| 8.3 Modes and Sources of reservation | Student will be able to list the modes and sources of reservation and differentiate among them. |
| 8.4 Types of Reservation | Student will know about the different types of reservation and will be able to differentiate among them. |
| 8.5 Systems of Reservation | Student will understand the systems of reservation in relation to manual reservation, semi automated reservation and automated reservation. |
| 8.6 Process of Reservation | The section will provide necessary skills to the student to handle a reservation request and process it. |
| 8.7 Group Reservation | Student will understand the process of group reservation and the points of difference from an FIT reservation. |
| 8.8 Cancellation and Revision | This section will provide knowledge and skill to a student to handle cancellation and revision requests of a guest. |
| 8.9 Selective Overbooking | Student will be able to define overbooking. He will be able to list the factors to be considered while overbooking hotel rooms. |
| 8.10 Reservation Reports | Student will be able to list the reports required in the reservation system and will be able to understand their importance. |

Assessment Plan: (For the Teachers)

| Unit-1 | Topic | Assessment Method | Time Plan | Remarks |
|--------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| 8.1 | Introduction | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 8.2 | Importance of Reservation | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 8.3 | Modes and Sources of Reservation | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 8.4 | Types of Reservation | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 8.5 | Systems of Reservation | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 8.6 | Process of Reservation | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 8.7 | Group Reservation | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 8.8 | Cancellation and Revision | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 8.9 | Selective Overbooking | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |
| 8.10 | Reservation Reports | Exercise : Question & Answer | | |

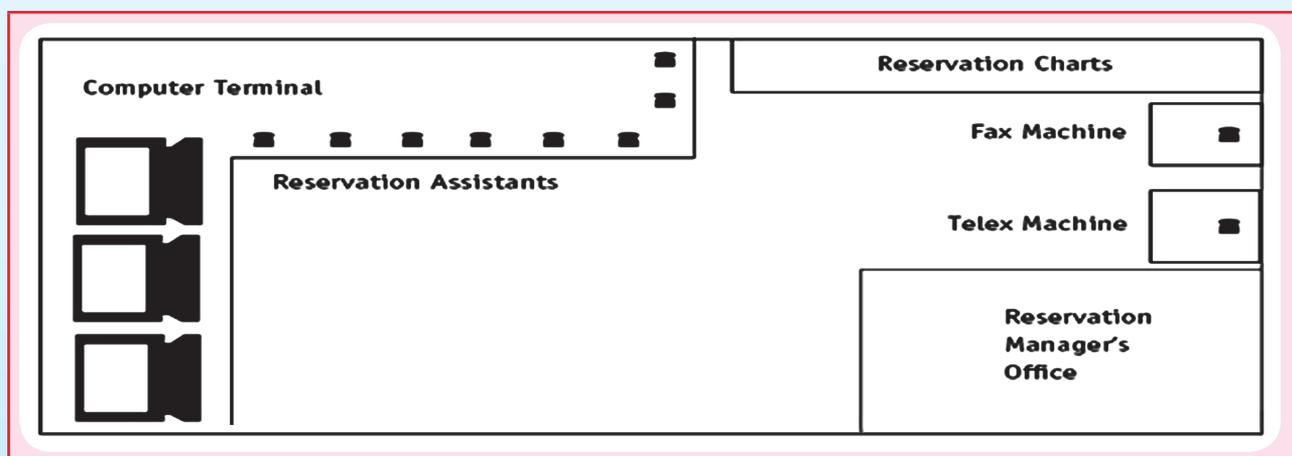
8.1 Introduction :

Reservation in the hotel industry is defined as 'blocking a particular type of guest room e.g., single room, double room, deluxe room, executive room, suite, etc.), for a definite duration of time (i.e., number of days of stay), for a particular guest'.

The reservation section of the front office department of a hotel is responsible for receiving and processing reservation queries.

Layout of the Reservation Section:

The location of the reservation section depends upon the size of hotel and the volume of business of the hotel.



Review Question

Q.1 Draw a neat layout of reservation department in a hotel.

8.2 Importance of Reservation

Advance booking of rooms is known as room reservation. Its importance for the guest and for the hotel is discussed as below:

For the Guest

1. Guarantees availability of accommodation.
2. Saves time in search and in check-in.
3. Helps in budgeting for the travel.
4. Removes anxiety and gives a feeling of safety.

For the Hotel

- ❖ Helps in planning.
- ❖ Useful in yield management.
- ❖ Important for duty- rosters and staff leave scheduling.
- ❖ Improves service and enhances guest satisfaction.

Review Question

Q.1 Discuss the importance of reservation from the guest and from the hotel's perspective.

8.3 Modes and Sources of Reservation

In common language mode refers to 'how' the reservation is received and source refers to 'from whom' the reservation is received.

Modes of reservation

- ❖ Telephone
- ❖ Fax
- ❖ Telex
- ❖ Internet
- ❖ Email
- ❖ Letter
- ❖ Telegram
- ❖ In-person

The process of reservation begins with an inquiry. A guest may contact a hotel for reservation either through:

- ✓ Written Mode
- ✓ Verbal Mode
- ✓ Reservation requests may also be made through oral communication known as verbal mode of reservation request.
- ✓ The advantage of oral communication is that it is fast, convenient, and generates immediate response or feedback, and one can get the complete information and clear any doubts through oral communication.
- ✓ The disadvantage is that it does not provide a permanent record.

- ✓ The various modes of verbal reservation request are as under:
- ✓ Telephone
- ✓ In person

Written Mode

- ❖ When a reservation request reaches the hotel in writing, the mode is classified as a written mode of reservation.
- ❖ The advantages of the written mode of reservations are that they are clear, unambiguous, and provide a written record for the hotel, which can be referred to in case of any miscommunication or confusion. The correspondence with the guest is filed for future reference.
- ❖ The various written mode for reservation request are as under:
 - ✓ Letter
 - ✓ Fax
 - ✓ Telex
 - ✓ Email

Sources of room reservation

- ❖ Direct
- ❖ Travel Agents
- ❖ Corporates
- ❖ Airlines
- ❖ Embassies
- ❖ GDS
- ❖ CRS
- ❖ RSO
- ❖ Inter-sell Agencies
- ❖ Referral Hotels

Direct Reservation is given to the hotel directly by the guest.

- ❖ **Travel Agent :** Travel agents give room bookings to the hotel on a commission basis.
- ❖ **Corporate:** Corporate or companies are a major source of business in the form of their executives travelling as business travellers and also the substantial conference business given by them.
- ❖ **Airlines:** Airlines give room business to hotels in the form of their crews and layover passengers. Specifically applicable for airport hotels.
- ❖ **Embassies:** Embassies are a source of business for hotels as they host cultural shows, business delegations, festivals, etc.
- ❖ **GDS:** Global Distribution system or GDS is a software system which brings together the room inventories of different hotels and other travel services together on one platform. Reservations booked by GDS have a direct interface with hotel's PMS (Property Management Software) to provide real-time room inventory, rates and availability.

Major Global Distribution System companies are as follows:

- ✓ Galileo Central Reservation Systems
 - ✓ Amadeus Computer Systems
 - ✓ Sabre Computer Systems
 - ✓ Trust International
 - ✓ SMART - Scandinavian Multi Access Reservation for Travel Agents
- ❖ **CRS:** Central Reservation System (CRS) is the internal reservation network of chain hotels and their franchised hotels. E.g. TRN or Taj Reservation Network.
- ❖ **RSO:** Regional Sales Offices (RSO) are responsible for sales and marketing of chain/individual hotel in a specific region. They are also a source of reservation for the hotel.
- ❖ **Inter-sell Agencies:** They are two or more business organizations, like Airline and Hotels, promoting each other's business for mutual gain. Hotels and car rental companies may also be inter-sell partners.
- ❖ **Referral Groups:** They are an informal or sometimes formal association of hotels who refer guests to each other in case of sold-out status or if a guest is travelling to another city where the hotel does not have a branch.

Review Questions

Q.1 Expand the following:

- (a) GDS
- (b) CRS
- (c) RSO
- (d) PMS
- (e) SMART

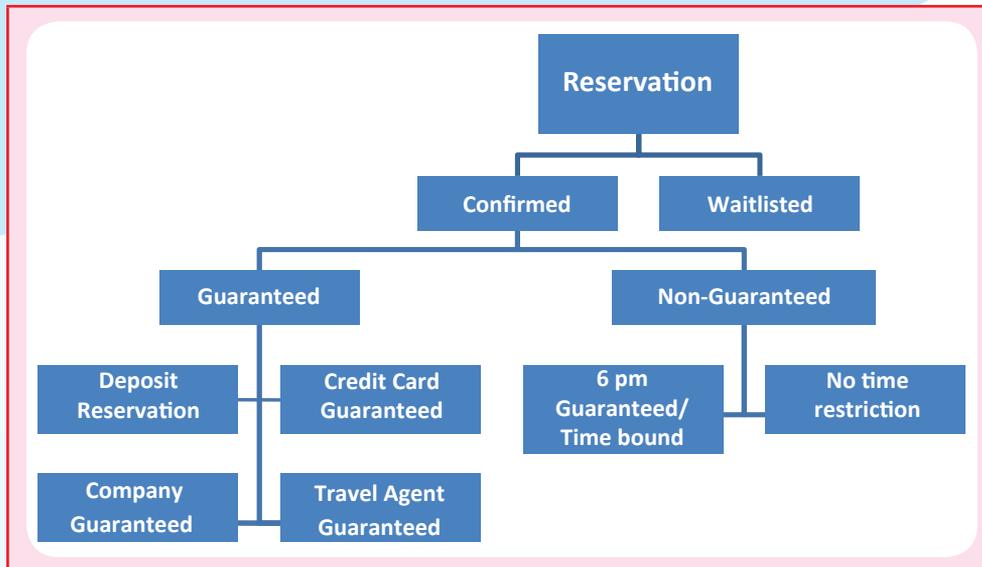
Q.2 Fill in the blanks:

- (a) GDS is a _____ system which brings together the room inventories of different hotels.
- (b) Informal association of hotels referring guests to each other are known as _____ groups.
- (c) A guest may give his reservation either through a _____ mode or through a _____ mode.
- (d) Reservations are important not only for the guests but also for the _____.

Q.3 Answer the following questions:

- Q. 1. Define Reservation.
- Q. 2. What is the importance of reservation for the guests?
- Q. 3. List the sources of reservation and discuss each one of them in brief.

8.4 Types of Reservation



Reservations can be categorised as per the following two criteria:

- ❖ Nature or the number of people travelling together
- ❖ Status of the reservation

Nature or the number of people travelling together

- ❖ Individual reservations - Bookings for FIT's for one or more rooms
- ❖ Groups - Bookings for a group of persons travelling with the same itinerary
- ❖ Conference - Room bookings for guests using the hotel's conference facilities (guests may or may not be travelling together).

Status of the Reservation

Confirmed Reservation - A booking in which a guest is committed a room and a confirmation number and letter has been sent.

Non-Guaranteed Reservation - It is a confirmed reservation for which the hotel has still not received a guarantee of payment in case of a cancellation/ no-show. Internationally, the room is held till 1800 hrs on the date of arrival, after which it may be released in favour of another reservation. Therefore, these reservations are also known as 6 pm confirmed reservation.

Guaranteed Reservation - It is a confirmed reservation which the guest has 'guaranteed' by making an advance deposit or by providing a credit card authorization, 'bill to company' letter or travel agent voucher which clearly state the client will pay in case of a cancellation/no-show. It guarantees the hotel will recover at least one night's room charge even if the guest does not come. The room is held till 12 noon the next day from arrival date.

- ❖ A guaranteed Reservation is a confirmation that the hotel will hold the reserved room for the guest and not release it to any other guest even if the guest doesn't arrive on time.
- ❖ This requires the guest to make an advance payment (part or full, depending on the hotel policy and the hotel occupancy for the requested stay dates), irrespective of whether the guest avails the reservation or not, unless the reservation is cancelled according to the hotel's cancellation procedures.
- ❖ The guaranteed Reservation can be obtained through one of the following ways:
 - ✓ Pre-payment
 - ✓ Contractual agreement
 - ✓ Allotment

Pre-Payment

- ❖ A guaranteed reservation requires the payment of the room rent or a specified amount in advance, known as pre-payment. As the hotel holds the room for the guest even after the cancellation hours, pre-payment protects the hotel from any loss of revenue in case of a last moment cancellation or a no-show.
- ❖ Pre-payment can be made by sending demand draft or depositing cash at the hotel.
- ❖ Cash deposit is the most preferred mode of accepting guaranteed reservation

Contractual Agreement

- ❖ A hotel may have a contract with an individual or a company for providing guaranteed reservations. According to such a contract, the hotel confirms the reservation for the individual or a person referred by the company on a guaranteed basis, and the person or the company agrees to pay for the reservation, even in the case of a no-show. Hotels may have contractual agreement with the following:
 - ❖ **Travel agencies/Tour operators**
 - ❖ **Corporate houses**
- ❖ **Travel Agencies/Tour Operators:** Travel agencies and tour operators make bulk purchases of rooms at a relatively low contracted price. They guarantee the hotel a minimum number of room nights in a particular period and agree to pay the room charges even if they are unable to fill the number of rooms as per their agreement with the hotel.
- ❖ **Corporate Houses:** In this case, a company or a corporate body may enter into a contract with a hotel, whereby the company guarantees payment for its employees or sponsored guests and accepts the financial responsibilities for any no-shows.

Waitlisted Reservation - If rooms are not currently available the request can be put on the 'waitlist'. It means that as soon as the rooms are available, the hotel will inform the caller of the status, in which case it may get converted into a confirmed/ guaranteed reservation. They do not impact room availability.

Tentative Reservation - The booker has 'blocked' accommodation (usually a large number of rooms) in anticipation of a movement in future. Such reservations normally have a 'cut-off period' within which they have to be guaranteed failing which the hotel can release accommodation. These reservations are called 'non-deduct' reservations i.e. they do not deduct rooms from the availability.

Time-limit in Reservation - Time-limit is applicable in case of non-guaranteed reservation. It is usually 6 hrs from the time of check-in. As hotels generally follow a 12 noon check-in time, it is also referred as 6

pm confirmed reservation. In this case, 6 hrs is the maximum time given for check-in failing which hotel may release the room to any walk-in guest.

Review Questions

- Q.1 Write short notes on the following :
- (a) Guaranteed Reservation
 - (b) Non-Guaranteed Reservation
 - (c) Waitlisted Reservation
 - (d) Time Limit

8.5 Systems of Reservation

Depending on the needs of the hotel and the volume of business, a hotel may adopt either:

- ❖ **Manual System :** In a manual system, all the reservation records are maintained manually. This old system of reservation is suitable for a small property, where the number of rooms is less and the volume of reservation requests is also low.
- ❖ **Automated System:** Automated reservation systems are computerized reservation systems that are used to store and retrieve room status information and conduct transactions. The information stored in the automatic system is the same as in a manual system. However, the processing of reservation request does not require manual study of bed room journals, density charts, or conventional charts. The reservation assistant can check the availability of rooms by clicking on a link on the computer. In this system, the reservation information is keyed into the electronic format of the reservation form, and this information is transferred to the central server where the room status is updated automatically.

Manual System of Reservation

The hotel may use the following in a manual reservation:

- ❖ **Diary System of Reservation:** As the name suggests, in this system a daily diary is kept, in which the reservation agent lists all arrivals due on a particular day.
 - ✓ It is usually kept on a loose-leaf basis.
 - ✓ The top page represents arrivals on the current date; this is removed and sent to the front desk for receiving the guests.
 - ✓ The hotel booking diary may be hard bound also. The diary system of reservation is only suitable for very small properties.
 - ✓ The tools used in diary system of reservation are as under:
- ❖ Booking diary
- ❖ Room status board/ reservation journal
- ❖ Expected arrival list/ Movement list
- ❖ Cancellation register
- ❖ Black list

Booking Diary

MONDAY 22ND JANUARY

| NAME | TYPE OF ROOM | NO. OF NIGHTS | RATE | DATE BOOKING | CONFIRMATION | ROOM NO. | REMARKS |
|-------------------|--------------|---------------|--------|--------------|--------------|----------|------------|
| Mr. Avinash Kumar | single | 2 | 5000/- | 22/1/2013 | Fax | 306 | No smoking |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

❖ **Whitney System of Reservation:** This system of room reservation, developed by the American Whitney Duplicating Check Company, is suitable for small and medium properties - with up to 150 rooms. It is based on the use of standard size slips, known as Whitney slips or Shannon slips, which can be held on a metallic carrier on Whitney racks.

❖ The advantages of using Whitney system are as under:

- ✓ Bookings can be kept in order of the date of arrival.
- ✓ Booking records may be arranged in alphabetical order.
- ✓ The racks and carriers can be used over and over again. The running expense is only of the slips.
- ✓ The Whitney racks are placed vertically, saving storage space.

Whitney slip

Name of Guests

Number of People

Arrival Date

Departure Date

Room Tariff

Special Requirements

Address

Telephone Number

Advance Reservation/Letting Chart

This is also referred to as the room reservation chart, advance letting chart or bed booking chart.

The chart is used for allocating rooms for specific periods and shows at a glance

1. Which rooms are let.
2. How long they will be occupied.
3. Which rooms are available for letting.
4. For what periods of time.

The entry is done by the receptionist allocating a room at the time of booking and noting this in the diary.

An entry is made on the chart in pencils, with the name of the guest or a reference number of the booking. The chart is usually made by small hotels.

Advance Letting Chart

| Room numbers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
|--------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|---|---|----|----|----|
| 101(s) | | Mr. D Singh | | | | | | |
| 102(s) | MR. Mehta Ravi | | | | | | | |
| 103(D) | | | | | | | | |
| 104(D) | | | | | | | | |
| 105(T) | | | | | | | | |
| 106(T) | | | | | | | | |
| 107(T) | | | MS Rao Sunita | | | | | |

DENSITY CHART

| Numbers of room Dates → | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|
| Single bed | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | | | |
| 4 | \ | \ | \ | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | |
| Double bed | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | \ | \ | \ | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | |
| Twin bed | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | \ | \ | \ | | | | | |
| 2 | \ | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | |

The density chart shows at a glance exactly how many rooms are available to let and their type. On this chart rooms are classified into groups of a similar type and no allocation of a specific room takes place until the guest arrives at the hotel.

Review Questions

- Q.1 State whether True or False:
- (a) Time limit is applicable in case of guaranteed reservation.
 - (b) Room numbers are blocked in density charts.
 - (c) Whitney slips are also known as shannon slips.
 - (d) Cash deposit is a common method of guaranteed reservation.
- Q.2 Match the following:
- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (i) Advance Letting Chart | (a) Metallic Carrier |
| (ii) Booking Diary | (b) 6 pm Guaranteed Reservation |
| (iii) Whitney Slips | (c) Room Availability |
| (iv) Non-Guaranteed Reservation | (d) Manual System |
- Q.3 Answer the following:
- Q. 1. Draw a chart to depict different types of reservation.
- Q. 2. Differentiate between guaranteed reservation and non-guaranteed reservation?
- Q. 3. Write a short note on automated system of reservation.

8.6 Process of Reservation

Steps in handling reservation are listed as below:

- ❖ **Step I:** Request for advance booking is received through any mode of reservation.
- ❖ **Step II:** Take down the details in a structured format known as Reservation Form.
- ❖ **Step III:** Transfer the information to PMS (Property Management System) which is hotel management software. Update the relevant fields in the page 'create new reservation'.
- ❖ **Step IV:** Send a letter of confirmation/ waitlist/regret to guest.
- ❖ **Step V:** Keep all correspondence related to reservation inside the reservation form which is like an envelope.
- ❖ **Step VI:** File the reservation form as per date of arrival. There is one file for each future date (usually for next 90 days). Forms are filed in an alphabetical order of the guest name (last name first e.g. Mr. Sharma Rajesh) in the file for that date.

Reservation Confirmation:

The hotel should communicate guests by telephone, telex, mail, or e-mail a Letter of Confirmation, which confirms the important points of the reservation agreement. This very letter might be shown at the registration process in order to accelerate the pace of registration and prove that the guest has the right to have a room at the hotel. The Hotel shall send a confirmation letter to all reserved potential guests, whether their reservations are guaranteed or non-guaranteed. Below are the main points that should be communicated in a confirmation letter:

- a) Name and address of the guest

- b) Date and time of arrival
- c) Room type and rate
- d) Length of stay
- e) Number of persons in a group, if any
- f) Reservation type [guaranteed or not]
- g) Reservation confirmation number
- h) Special requests, if any

Confirmation numbers:

Hotels shall communicate meaningful confirmation numbers to their potential guests. These numbers shall have statistical meanings, which might help the hotel in maintaining an efficient historical database. Here is an example:

❖ 22 02 G JC 63

- a) **22:** Guest's scheduled arrival date.
- b) **02:** Group reservation. In this very system, 01 might mean Free Independent Traveler.
- c) **G:** Means that the reservation is guaranteed. If N is written, it means non-guaranteed.
- d) **JC:** Are the initials of the reservation agent who processed the reservation
- e) **63:** Consecutive numbering of all reservation confirmation numbers issued in the current year.

Sample format: Reservation Form

Hotel XYZ

| | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Name of the Guest | | Designation | Company/ Travel Agent | | Confirmation number | |
| Date of Arrival | No. of Nights | Date of departure | Number of rooms/type of rooms | No. of Persons | Expected time of arrival | |
| Airport pick up details ❖ YES/NO ❖ Flight number: ❖ Exp. Time of Arrival | | Special instructions/Remarks | | Billing Instructions | Mode of payment | |
| Given by | Contact details | Received by | Time and date | Reservation status | | |

How to handle a reservation call from a guest

1. Call opening

Hotel ABC International , Reservations, Greetings.
You are speaking with XYZ. How may I assist you?

2. Address guest concern and confirm guest name.

Eg. I will assist you with that. May I know who am I speaking with?
Confirm spelling and pronunciation if name is not understood

3. Confirm identity if required

Is this reservation for yourself?

4. Take details of hotel name, dates, rooms, occupancy, and children and check availability

Advise child policy as required.

5. Previous stays and purpose of visit

“While I check availability may I enquire if....

a) Business or leisure”

b) If International guest, on a planned visit to India check planned destinations and offer assistance / recommend itinerary / special offer

Resort – “Is this, a leisure trip for you or are you traveling for a special occasion”

c) Previous stay in the hotel.

6. Share availability (not category)

Situation 1: If rooms are not available

Do you have alternate dates or would you like me to process a waitlist reservation.

Or, would you like me to check the availability of any other hotel / resort?

Situation 2: If rooms are available proceed with the reservation.

7. Room Category Description

Introduction of room types (dependent on previous stays)

Up selling of room types can be done here.

8. Share Rates

All public rates with inclusions restrictions, supplements, taxes.

9. Cancellation and Guarantee Policy

If no guaranteed “I am afraid the reservation will be on waitlist and will be confirmed on the receipt of guarantee, subject to availability at that time”.

10. Loyalty Programme

Are you an ABC International Privilege Programme Member?

If Yes - Check for membership no. and feed in system; If No - Inform about the programme.

11. Reservation Details

“Could you please spell your name, last name first” (if not spelt earlier, verify phonetically).

“May I have your contact number and email address”. Verify all contact details.

“May I have your credit card details?” (type, no. and expiration and verify all) Room Preference: “Would

you have any preferences towards the room like a smoking or non smoking room.

12. Arrival Assistance

Transport assistance – intercity/airport/station

Expected time of arrival and travel details

Check –in, check out time.

13. Recap

“I would like to verify the reservation details. The reservation is for... Guest name, hotel name, dates, number of rooms and occupancy, rates, preferences. This reservation stands (Confirmed / requested) with reference number.

14. Confirmation

I have sent you an email confirmation for the reservation which you will receive shortly.

15. Call Closing

Mr. / Ms. XYZ, would you like me to provide you with some information about the hotel?

You were speaking to (Agent name) Thank you for calling Hotel ABC International Reservations, have a nice day / afternoon.

Billing instructions during reserving a room

This is important information, which needs to be ascertained at the time of reservation and noted in the reservation form. There are various modes of payment through which a guest can settle his bill at the end of his stay with our hotel.

Guests can pay us in any of the following ways:-

Direct:

When a guest would himself settle the bill at the end of his stay for the room and the facilities of the hotel as used, it is termed as direct payment. He could settle either by cash or credit card.

- ❖ **Cash:** A guest can pay in either Indian rupees or in foreign currency. The foreign currency is changed to Indian rupees before a settlement can be done. This conversion is done using an encashment form.
- ❖ **Credit Card:** Hotels accept many credit cards such as Master, Visa, American Express and Diners Club. It is important to remember the cards that are not accepted by your hotel. While taking the details of the credit card one must definitely note down the credit card number and the expiry date.

Bill to company

Based on the volume of business and the credit worthiness of a company, a committee in the hotel decides upon a list of companies that can be given credit and for what period. On receiving a request for Bill to Company, one needs to ask for an authorization letter from the respective company, which needs to be attached to the correspondence. Always ask bookers to be specific when they ask for bills to be sent to a company. Many companies do not pay for personal expenses like liquor and tobacco. Other versions of bill to company include:

- ❖ **Travel Agent:** A similar negotiation as above is done with the Travel Agents for extending them a facility of credit. In case of travel agencies, a 'voucher' is received from them, which authorizes the hotel to forward the bills to their office for payment of the mentioned services. Each such voucher itself carries all the information of the negotiated agreement with the hotel and also has all the details of the guest stay.
- ❖ **Redemption vouchers:** Schemes are launched from time to time and the guests avail themselves of the facilities. Sometimes, a guest stay may be settled on a redemption coupon or voucher. In such cases there is a time period specified during which a guest could redeem the facility and mostly it is during the off season.

Review Questions

- Q. 1 Draw the sample format of a reservation form.
- Q. 2 Write the step by step process of handling reservation.

8.7 Group Reservation

Groups constitute a substantial chunk of the hotel business. Resorts, in particular, rely heavily on this segment. Now-a-days, conference groups are an important segment for business hotels as well. Group reservation, essentially, follows the same process as in an FIT (free individual traveler) but there are some points of difference in the process which are discussed as below:

Steps in group reservation

- ❖ **Step I:** Generally, tour operator or group organizer visits the hotel in person as group reservation involves rate negotiations and an agreement on facilities to be offered.
- ❖ **Step II:** The reservation assistant checks the availability of rooms before rates are negotiated.
- ❖ **Step III:** Rooms are, initially, blocked on a tentative basis. It is confirmed only after a contract is signed and payment conditions are finalized.
- ❖ **Step IV:** A cut-off-date is decided before which organizer must make an advance payment and submits the rooming-list, failing which room block is released for other guests.
- ❖ **Step V:** Food and Beverage department is informed much in advance about the meal plan and number of packs to help them plan menu compilations.

Conducting a reservation request for a group shall be treated differently than accommodating a reservation of individual guests (i.e. Frequent Independent Traveler). The main reason is that individual reservation requests are treated by the reservation department, while group reservations are initiated by the Sales & Marketing division, and finalized through a careful coordination of the reservation from one hand and the marketing from the other.

- ❖ Below is a detailed procedure of how group reservation, in a typical hotel, is conducted:
 1. A group representative, a member of the travel agency or the tour operator, not individuals, shall communicate group reservations' request to the hotel's marketing department.
 2. Upon availability, the hotel's reservation department shall block the requested number of rooms for this very group.
 3. The Hotel shall give a deadline for the group, in order to receive their final list. That deadline is called Cut-off Date.

4. After receiving the final list, the reservation department shall change the desired number of rooms' status from blocked to booked (or reserved) rooms, and release the remaining rooms (if any left) as vacant.
5. If the hotel did not receive the final list by the cut-off date, then the reservation department has all the right to cancel the group reservation and release all the initially booked rooms into vacant rooms. However, management shall use this right with precautions especially when it comes to groups reserving from travel agencies and tour operators of which the hotel is frequently operating.

| Rooming list | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|---------|
| Confirmation no | Name | Passport no's | Arrival date | Departure date | Room type | Sharing with | Remarks |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

Rooming-list

Rooming list is provided by group operators before group's arrival. It has names of all the guests along with their passport details (for foreigners) and details of type of room to be allotted along with the name of the sharer. It is an important tool for blocking of rooms and saves considerable time during group check-in.

Blanket reservation

Blanket reservation is a block -reservation without individual names of the guests. E.g. 60 hotel rooms blocked for a marriage party.

Review Questions

- Q. 1 Write a note on rooming list.
Q. 2 How group reservation is different from the reservation of an individual guest.

8.8 Cancellation and Revision

Steps in cancellation/amendment of a reservation

- ❖ **Step I:** On receiving cancellation request, fill-in a cancellation/amendment form.
- ❖ **Step II:** Update the information in PMS.
- ❖ **Step III:** Take out the original reservation form and mark it cancelled. Keep the cancellation form inside the reservation form and file it back for reference.
- ❖ **Step IV:** In case of a revision/amendment of reservation the form is accordingly updated and the reservation form is kept as per the new date of arrival (if a change in date of arrival is requested)

Amendment /cancellation form

| Original booking | | Amendment booking | |
|------------------|------|-------------------|------|
| Surname | | Surname | |
| Address | | Address | |
| Title | | Title | |
| Arrival date | Time | Arrival date | Time |
| Departure date | Time | Departure date | Time |
| Type of Room | | Type of Room | |
| Time of Arrival | | Time of Arrival | |
| Form of payment | | | |
| Contact | | | |
| Remarks | | | |
| Account no | | Date | |
| Taken By | | | |

Review Questions

- Q. 1 Draw the format of amendment/cancellation form.
- Q. 2 Write the step-by-step process of cancellation/amendment of a reservation.

8.9 Selective overbooking

Overbooking or capacity management is a yield management tool which means booking more rooms than the actual capacity. Hotels overbook to off-set potential losses due to No-show, under stay and last minute cancellations.

While overbooking following points are considered by the Front office managers:

- ❖ Past history of No-shows, Cancellations and under stays.
- ❖ Ratio of Guaranteed and Non-Guaranteed reservation.
- ❖ Ratio of Groups and FITs.
- ❖ Status of reconfirmation of the booking.
- ❖ Difference between the date when the reservation was given and the date of arrival, known as lead time.
- ❖ Past experience with the guest in terms of the materialisation of his reservation.

Review Question

- Q. 1 What are the points considered by a front office manager while over booking in a hotel.

8.10 Reservation Reports

The reservation department compiles many reports for the use of all departments. Some of the most commonly used reservation reports include:

- ❖ **Reservation transaction report:** The reservation transaction report is the summary of the daily activities of the reservation department.
- ❖ **Commission agent report:** This report includes the amount payable by the hotel to the different commission agents
- ❖ **Turn away or refusal report:** At times hotels have to 'turn away' guests due to unavailability of rooms.
- ❖ **Revenue forecast report:** The revenue forecast report is a projection of the volume of business that the hotel will be generating in a specified duration.
- ❖ **Expected arrival list:** The list of names and surnames, along with the respective room types, of the guests who are expected to arrive the next day.
- ❖ **Stayover list:** The list of names and surnames, along with the respective room numbers, of the guests who are expected to continue to occupy their rooms the next day.
- ❖ **Expected departure list:** The list of names and surnames, along with the respective room numbers, of the guests who are expected to depart the next day.

Review Questions

- Q.1 Fill in the blanks:
- (a) _____ is a block without any names of the guests.
 - (b) When a guest is refused room due to non-availability he is known as a _____.
 - (c) Overbooking or capacity management is a _____ tool.
 - (d) Group operators provide _____ list before the arrival of the group
 - (e) The list that provides information about guests expected to depart that day _____.
 - (f) The list that provides information about the guests who are expected to continue to occupy their rooms _____.
 - (g) The list that provides information about guests who were refused accommodation in the hotel _____.
- Q.2 State whether True or False :
- (i) The deadline given to the group by the hotel for submission of all details is known as cut-off date.
 - (II) While handling a telephonic reservation request, guest name must be taken after taking down all other details of the reservation.
 - (III) Passport number is important information in the reservation form.
 - (IV) Reservation forms are filed as per the date of arrival.
- Q.3 Answer the following questions:
- Q. 1. Write the steps in handling reservation of a guest.
 - Q. 2. Write a note on group reservation.
 - Q. 3. What do you understand by over booking? Discuss in brief?
 - Q. 4. List and briefly discuss the reports used in reservation process.

8.11 Let us Sum Up

Advance booking of hotel rooms is known as Reservation. Front office department has a separate section for this purpose which is situated in the back office. Modes of reservation refers to the how a hotel can receive reservation such as in person, letter, telephone, etc. Sources of reservation refer to 'from where' hotels may receive reservations such as from corporate, airlines, travel agents, central reservation systems, etc.

Hotels follow a manual, semi automatic or fully automatic system of reservation. Manual system includes booking diary method, semi-automatic system includes whitney system, while a fully automatic system is a computerized reservation system with hotel management software, known as PMS.

Reservations are of different types including guaranteed reservation, non-guaranteed reservation, waitlisted reservation etc. Group reservation differs from FIT reservation in the form of negotiations on rate at the time of receiving the reservation. It has a concept of cut-off date rooming list and blanket booking.

8.12 Practical Activities

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|-----------------------|--|
| Activity I: | Assignment for the students to visit the websites of different hotels & hotel booking portals and discuss in class about their observations. |
| Activity II: | Role play on handling of reservation request over telephone and filling of reservation form. |
| Activity III: | Exercise in filling up booking diary. |
| Activity IV: | Exercise on Filling up of advance letting chart. |
| Activity V: | Exercise on filling up of density chart. |
| Activity VI: | Exercise on handling room reservation through whitney system. |
| Activity VII: | Exercise on filling of cancellation/Amendment form. |
| Activity VIII: | Exercise on filling of Room status Board |

UNIT 9

Assignments

- Activity I:** Assignment for the students to visit the websites of different hotels & hotel booking portals
- ❖ Students to visit the websites of at least 5 hotels and five hotel booking portals (e.g. make my trip, clear trip, yatra etc).
 - ❖ Students should note down their observations and share them in the class.
- Activity II:** Role play on handling of reservation request over telephone and filling of reservation form.
(Role play by two students one as a guest another student as receptionist)

Role-play (1) (Guest calls hotel via telephone)

(Reservation assistant attends the call within 3-rings as a standard procedure followed in hotels to ensure that the staff is alert).

- Receptionist:** Thanks for calling Hotel Plaza. Mary speaking.
- Caller:** Hello. I'm interested in booking a room for the September long weekend.
- Receptionist:** I'm afraid we're totally booked for that weekend. There's a convention in town and we're the closest hotel to the convention center.
- Caller:** Oh, I didn't realize. Well what about the weekend after that?
- Receptionist:** So... Friday the seventeenth?
- Caller:** Yes. Friday and Saturday.
- Receptionist:** It looks like we have a few vacancies left. We recommend that you make a reservation, though. It's still considered peak season then.
- Caller:** Okay. Do you have any rooms with two double beds? We're a family of four.
- Receptionist:** Yes, all of our rooms have two double beds. The rate for that weekend is Rs.5000/- a night.
- Caller:** That's reasonable. And do you have cots? One of my daughters might be bringing a friend.
- Receptionist:** We do, but we also charge an extra Rupees one thousand per person for any family with over four people. The cost is free.
- Caller:** Okay, but I'm not positive if she is coming. Can we pay when we arrive?

- Receptionist:** Yes, but we do require a credit card deposit of rupees 2500/- to hold the room. You can cancel up to five days in advance and we will refund your deposit.
- Caller:** Great, I'll call you right back. I have to find my husband's credit card.
- Receptionist:** Okay. Oh, and just to let you know...our outdoor pool will be closed, but our indoor pool is open.

Role-play (2)

- Caller:** I would like to make a hotel reservation.
- Receptionist:** May I know whom I am speaking to.
- Caller:** My name is P. Smith and I want a room for my myself.
- Receptionist:** What day will you be arriving?
- Caller:** I will be arriving on May 14th.
- Receptionist:** How long will you be staying?
- Caller:** I need the room for 3 nights.
- Receptionist:** How many people will be staying in the room?
- Caller:** I will be staying in the room alone.
- Receptionist:** Would you like a smoking or nonsmoking room?
- Caller:** We need a nonsmoking room.
- Receptionist:** We have booked a room for you. Please be sure to arrive before 4:00 on your check-in date.

Key points for the students

- ❖ Attend the call politely and courteously.
- ❖ Wish the guest according to time and identify your hotel name and your department.
- ❖ Ensure the room rate is informed to the guest.
- ❖ Repeat all guest details to confirm the reservation.
- ❖ Use phrases like
 - ✓ May I help you,
 - ✓ May I suggest
 - ✓ We are happy to inform you
 - ✓ Thank you for calling

Activity III : Exercise in filling up booking diary as per guest request

- ❖ This system is most suitable for small hotels.
- ❖ This book is also called as bound book.

- ❖ Each page of this diary represents one day.
- ❖ The diary system records all guest reservation.
- ❖ Each page of the diary displays the expected arrivals of the day.
- ❖ This diary has 365 pages.
- ❖ All special request like pool facing room, airport pickup etc. will be maintained.

Procedure

- ❖ Guest reservation enquiry received.
- ❖ Reservation manager-check room availability in diary system as per guest requested date of arrival.
- ❖ Fill up reservation form with all necessary guest details like,
 - ✓ Arrival date and time
 - ✓ Departure date and time
 - ✓ Type of room requested single, double etc.
 - ✓ Mode of payment.
 - ✓ Permanent address.
- ❖ Entry made in diary and confirmation letter sent to guest.
- ❖ Block the room for the guest.

Note- main purpose of this diary system is all guest reservation records are being maintained in a consolidated book and no chance of missing documents. Very safe to handle and maintain.

Activity IV : Exercise on Filling up of advance letting chart

- ❖ Guest calls for booking room.
- ❖ Reservation assistant-notes down all information of guest.
- ❖ Guest name.
- ❖ Arrival date.
- ❖ Departure date.
- ❖ Type of room booked.
- ❖ Rate of the room.
- ❖ The chart is marked and updated with above mentioned details.
- ❖ Blocking of rooms to be done by the reservation assistant.

(All the other basic formalities of enquiring full details of the guest remain the same).

Activity V : Exercise on filling up of density chart

Key points for the students to fill up

- ❖ This chart also known as room position chart.
- ❖ It is useful for large hotels.
- ❖ This chart books the room of a particular category of room.
- ❖ Blocking of room done by marking against particular room type.

- ❖ The room no will be assigned at the time of guest arrival only.
- ❖ It is much easier and quick to perform the reservation of rooms.
- ❖ Over booking can be done.
- ❖ Counting of room availability is easy in this manual method.

(All the other basic formalities of enquiring full details of the guest remain the same).

Activity VI: How to handle room reservation through whitney system

Key points for the students to fill up

- ❖ This whitney rack is arranged on the wall of reservation department with 31 racks for the current month.
- ❖ Shannon/ whitney slip has details of guest arrival date, departure date, room no assigned, rate of the room etc.)
- ❖ Colour code on slip will show the type of guest to identify the profile.
White colour slip - for F.I.T guest
Green colour slip - for Group guest
Pink colour slip - for V.I.P. guest.

Reservation procedure

- ❖ The slip in racks shows that the room is occupied.
- ❖ After the departure of the guest the slip is removed.
- ❖ These slips should be typed with name of guest, arrival & departure date and time
- ❖ Billing instruction will also be mentioned in the slip. This is also a manual type of reservation

Activity VII: Exercise on filling of cancellation/Amendment form

- ❖ Students to perform an impromptu role-play on cancellation and amendment of existing reservation request.
- ❖ Format of cancellation/amendment form to be filled-in by the students.
- ❖ Appropriate changes to be recorded in the corresponding reservation form.
- ❖ Exercise should end with proper filing of all documents.



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