

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Abstract

Ethics are a sensitive matter for individuals or for organizations which generates trust. In everyday life, we try to be honest and trustworthy in all matters with others. But in business, it is the soul of success, compromise with ethics means compromise with business success. The hospitality industry being a service industry, role professional ethics play as a pivot on which the whole business revolves. Therefore, all employees must be trained enough to strictly follow an ethical approach while dealing with the guest.

Keywords: Ethics, Trust, Honest, Organisation, Ethical Approach, Hospitality Industry

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I. INTRODUCTION

There is a famous saying about the hospitality industry, “a home away from home”. Here the customers are regarded as guests. But these guests are paid guests, who pay for the services utilized by them. It is a common perception of humans to access the service provided with value for money. It is the basic element that acts as a catalyst to generate customer expectations. In organized sectors hotels are categorized with star status from one star to five stars and five-star deluxe. As the star increases, the tariff also increases and hence guest expectations also increased. It means the demand must meet with a supply of the hotel. To maintain the minimum gap between demand and supply, ethics in hotels play an important role. Ethics are human responsibility fulfilled with honesty. It differentiates right from wrong in human behaviours and doing things which also like ourselves. Basically, it is morally acceptable to others without any malicious intentions.

1. Types of Ethics: In hotel sectors, two types of ethics are common which are-

- Operational Ethics
- Human Value Ethics

- **Operational Ethics:** These are basic requirements of hotel employees, essential to run the hotel effectively and efficiently. In this majority of ethics are skill based which is followed as per the SOP of the department. The employees develop these skills by induction training at the initial phase of joining. Knowledge and skills are also enhanced at the college level by doing hotel management courses. Basically, guest relations and dealing with customers are customized from hotel to hotel. The brand also plays an important role to set operational ethics to create satisfied customers by providing expected services to match guest expectations.

- **Presentation of ethics department-wise :** Ethics in Hotel Front Office: Front Office is the front of the hotel where guest first approaches the hotel official. The key sections are reception, information, registration/ reservation, and payment. This is the place where the guest asks all kinds of assistance and complaint solutions. So, Front Office is the first and last point of contact for customers. The ethical functionality in this department impacts the brand and goodwill of the hotel. The front office staff has to –

Grooming and hygiene is the basic ethics working in front office department

- Provide the correct information to customers
- Clearly say No to those services not available
- Welcoming guests with a smile & with good gestures by name, if front office desk agent knows the guest's name
- Assist the guest in case of emergency
- Do not make any promise of those things beyond the jurisdiction of the hotel
- Be professional and courteous always with guest and always be polite by frequently using mannerism words
- Follow telephone etiquettes while communicating on telephone
- Always be a good listener and reply with full confidence
- Follow the rules of the house at the time of registration of customers

- Do not use ambiguous words while conversant with guest
- Maintain secrecy of all customers' details
- While using cards maintain their secret & be cautious about the safety of transactions
- GRE must ensure the comfort and convenience of customers as being representative of the management
- GRE provides internal PR to enhance the perception of the hotel that should match guest expectations
- Carefully handle lost and found records and maintains the belongings in respectable way
- Maintain transparency while handling guest complaints & disputes and abide by rules and regulations
- Interpret and safeguard house policies with customers
- Ensure efficient transportation services
- provide correct information to the guest about places and other concierge services
- Be responsible for the left luggage procedures
- Give final clearance to bell boy to shift guest luggage for departure

II. ETHICS IN HOUSEKEEPING DEPARTMENT:

This department is responsible for cleaning maintenance and aesthetic upkeep of the hotel. The trained personnel are recruited to perform all activities to keep the hotel hygienic standard and make the property cosy so as to provide their customers with a welcoming and comfortable atmosphere. Cleanliness is the most inevitable factor over all other factors of attraction for the guest. The staffs also interact with the guests. Therefore, this department must ensure operational ethics at all times. The staff has to-

- Cleaning & Maintenance as per Hotel's SOP
 - Preparation of rooms as per standard defined by the management and star status
 - Do not use the bathrooms of the guest room by the staff while preparing the rooms
 - Cleaning and ambiance of the rooms must match with the promotional materials
 - Follow DND rules and ask for permission for cleaning of occupied rooms from the guest
 - Do not pressurize the guest to make payment in the room
 - Deposit the belongings found in the room once the guest checked out in the lost & found department
 - Sanitization must match the star status
 - Lay all the room supplies and bathroom supplies as per the checklist prepared for the purpose
 - Hot water supply should be properly ensured and Check air conditioning of the rooms before the rooms are let out
 - Provide floral requirements if already mentioned in publishing materials.
- **Ethics in Food Production:** Hotel kitchens and Bakeries are food production areas where food is prepared. So, it is the most sensitive area related to the health of customers. The policy of the food service area is to earn reputation first and profit second. Therefore, production ethics play an important role to protect human values. All staff working in the kitchen usually termed as a chef are uniformed staff because

no one is allowed to enter the kitchen without proper uniforms. The Chefs are the reputed hotel employees who create fascinating dishes and the public love to relish their popular cuisine. To become a chef, one has to learn the cooking skill as well as good knowledge of food materials. Cooking is an art as well as a science. The customers trust more on the chef more than any other person and assumed the dish produced by them are not only tasty but also healthy by the use of good quality ingredients. Therefore, chefs have to- Enter the production area only in a chef's uniform

- Sanitize hands before handling food materials
 - Follow the highest standard of hygiene as prescribed by the company
 - Procure fresh vegetables and fruits
 - Follow the rules of mise-en-place
 - Be honest about the use of a pan, do not mix Veg preparation in Non-Veg prepared pan
 - Portion Control must be followed strictly
 - Quality control of all dishes must be ensured
 - Only use those ingredients which have organisation claims
 - Periodic pest control should be followed to avoid infestation
 - Leftover food should be used as per the house law
 - Garbage disposal should be proper
 - Insects and flies must not enter the kitchen area
- **Ethics in Food and Beverage Service Area:** Food and beverage service area include restaurants, bars, banquets, coffee shops, grillrooms, etc. where food and beverage are served to the customers. The personnel, who serve food require specific skills and knowledge of different types of service. One has to show courteousness to customers and professionals by showing operational ethics as he is the link between customers and menu and establishment and creates value for the brand of the hotel. Therefore, the serving people have to-
 - Service staff should be well groomed and maintain personal hygiene well
 - Keep the ambiance of the service area as per star status
 - Maintain sanitation and hygiene in the restaurant and back area
 - All the equipment, cutlery, and crockery must be sanitized before use
 - Always followed the sequence of service
 - Lean towards guests while serving or communicating as per the prescribed rules & never argue with customers
 - Serve the food at the right temperature
 - Converse with the customers in courteous language tactfully in a well-spoken manner and conduct should always be flawless
 - At the time of taking the order guide the customers about the selection of the menu and explain the main ingredients, especially those ingredients which might be objectionable to some community of people
 - Always helps ladies to be seated and start serving from ladies' first
 - **Human Values Ethics:** Human values are basically human consciousness to differentiate right from wrong and always choose the straight and right path even in

difficult situations. It is the trust which compels employees to be honest in dealing with customers and it is the path of long association and formula of success and brand image. It is an individual approach that is called the behavioural approach. Which also plays an important role in the character building of individuals and earning customers satisfaction.

The hotel provides products and services to its customers. The products are food and drinks while there is a list of services the guest enjoys if ethically genuine. So, there is a direct proportion of guest satisfaction and ethics followed. Hence-

Ethics follow α Satisfaction

III. ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

Human values teach ethical behaviour, how to respond to others, respect others and assist others. Behavior is a set of qualities that reflect during interaction with other people. Professional behavior is the set of acquired qualities essential for business growth. On the other hand, inherent behavior is the transfer of quality from parents and ancestors. Ethical behavior is the bunch of qualities that make the human being sophisticated and able to differentiate right from wrong. Even in difficult situations do the right things under undue pressure. These qualities are integrity with the organization, fairness in dealing, trust, accountability, honesty, maintaining the privacy of customers, etc. These are basically codes of ethics for employees and customers. Managers should always discourage unethical behaviour during working hours and try to be role models to others. If an employee follows the rules of ethics, he may be able to take difficult decisions. It also reflects on customer satisfaction and employees' satisfaction with the job.

Metrics of Professional Ethics in the Hospitality Industry

- 1. Respect:** Respect for oneself, its job, and the guest is the key to successfully building relationships within the team. The staff is expected to appreciate the needs and expectations of the customers. A team has to work together to ease the burden of a collective workload.
- 2. Honesty and Integrity:** Clarity in dealing either with the guest or with the co-worker should always be reflected. The information provided to the guest must be accurate and no guesswork and always follow the promise you make. It is very important to be a good listener and consider all ideas before taking any decision.
- 3. Kindness and Generosity:** Always be kind to the guest as well as to your colleagues. Similarly, the guest always desires recognition, show them when situations arise. For example, when a birthday or anniversary arrives, gift them with a birthday or anniversary cake and provide an upgrade whenever possible.
- 4. Sincerity and Loyalty:** Always follow your words. In a business environment, no one is expected to be hundred per cent informed, so, always try to gather maximum information, and do not admit that you know everything. The managers should identify the weakness of any worker and after identification, do not cry over him but instead help them.

Similarly focus on the strength of the team and motivate them to perform well. Try to fulfill customer satisfaction to achieve guest loyalty for the organisation or brand. Therefore, employees should be true to themselves and to the business to generate the expected quality.

5. **Enthusiasm and Endurance:** Always be positive. Positivity enhances productivity. The hotel employee should finish their task without any complaint and should be eager to please the guest as well as the team. To regain energy, always take a short break. Try to begin the day with a workout to fit body and soul. The employees should also focus oneself to keep fit and be able to serve customers energetically.
6. **Trustworthiness and Fairness:** Trust is the soul of success. So, finish their task assigned in time. This may reflect self-satisfaction and feel accountability. The component of trustworthiness is a content rule, monetization, and applicability (managementexchange.com). Be fair while dealing with two people or groups at the time of crisis to resolve conflict, e.g. with guests and employees. Be realistic at the time of resolving the issues.
7. **Tenacity and Communication:** A hotel is a place of human interaction that floats between satisfaction and dissatisfaction. So, be prepared to work through stressful situations. The key element of tenacity is perseverance. It identifies successful people to unsuccessful people and the only difference underlined quote is lack of will. Communication is the solution to every problem. So, use it effectively.

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