



SERI BUKU ILMU PARIWISATA KONSENTRASI
PERHOTELAN

Kasir Kantor Depan

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BAB I KASIR KANTOR DEPAN DAN PERKEMBANGANNYA

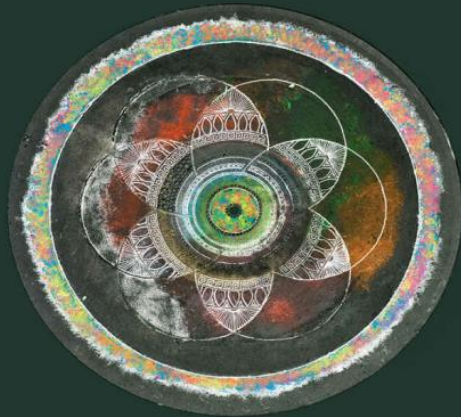
1.1. Hotel dan Kasir Kantor Depan

Hotel adalah usaha akomodasi yang dikelola secara komersial yang memberikan layanan makan, minum dan fasilitas penunjang lainnya dibuka untuk umum dengan menggunakan sebagian atau seluruh bangunannya. Untuk mampu menjalankan usahanya, sebuah hotel tentunya didukung oleh para profesional yang tergabung dalam sebuah organisasi hotel yang terdiri dari berbagai departemen yang saling mendukung, seperti : *front office* (kantor depan), *housekeeping* (tata graha) , *fb production* (tata boga), *fb service* (Tata hidangan), *sales and marketing*, *accounting*, *human resources*, *guest activity*, *security* dan departemen lainnya sesuai dengan kebutuhan operasional hotel.

Front office departemen merupakan salah satu bagian paling depan dari suatu hotel yang berfungsi sebagai penjual kamar. *Front office* adalah cermin dari kualitas hotel yang akan pertama dan terakhir kali dinilai tamu. Kesiapan, kesigapan, ketepatan serta kemampuan semua karyawan di *front office* department merupakan hal yang sangat penting.



JOHN W. CRESWELL • J. DAVID CRESWELL



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Chapter 9 Qualitative Methods

Qualitative methods demonstrate a different approach to scholarly inquiry than methods of quantitative research. Although the processes are similar, qualitative methods rely on text and image data, have unique steps in data analysis, and draw on diverse designs. Writing a method section for a proposal or study for qualitative research partly requires educating readers as to the intent of qualitative research, mentioning specific designs, carefully reflecting on the role the researcher plays in the study, drawing from an ever-expanding list of types of data sources, using specific protocols for recording data, analyzing the information through multiple steps of analysis, and mentioning approaches for documenting the methodological integrity or accuracy—or validity—of the data collected. This chapter addresses these important components of writing a good qualitative method section into a proposal or study. [Table 9.1](#) presents a checklist for reviewing the qualitative methods section of your project to determine whether you have addressed important topics.

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Lucius Walker

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Tourism and Hospitality Management



The historic Plaza Hotel in New York



The Peninsula Paris

A hotel is an establishment that provides lodging paid on a short-term basis. Facilities provided may range from a modest-quality mattress in a small room to large suites with bigger, higher-quality beds, a dresser, a fridge and other kitchen facilities, upholstered chairs, a flatscreen television and en-suite bathrooms. Small, lower-priced hotels may offer only the most basic guest services and facilities. Larger, higher-priced hotels may provide additional guest facilities such as a swimming pool, business centre (with computers, printers and other office equipment), childcare, conference and event facilities, tennis and/or basketball courts, gymnasium, restaurants, day spa and social function services. Hotel rooms are usually numbered (or named rooms in some smaller hotels and B&Bs) to allow guests to identify their room. Custom-decorated rooms in some boutique, high-end hotels, make the stay more memorable. Some hotels offer meals as part of a room and board arrangement. In the United Kingdom, a hotel is required by law to serve food and drinks to all guests within certain stated hours. In Japan, capsule hotels provide a tiny room suitable only for sleeping and shared bathroom facilities.

Hospitality Management

— A practical introduction —

EDITOR
Deseré Kokt



Hospitality Management – A practical introduction

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2.1.1 Front desk agents

Front desk agents are responsible for checking guests in and out, as well as processing their payment. Front desk agents need to be responsive to the needs

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Christine Boshoff | Theme 2

of guests and they need to communicate these needs to other departments like housekeeping or maintenance. Large establishments usually have security guards that oversee the vehicle entrance gate and they should inform the front desk agent when guests arrive.

The front desk liaises with security on which guests should be staying at the establishment and how many rooms are available for walk-in guests (guests with no booking); a guest list is normally given to security each day. In small five star establishments the front desk agent would normally answer the gate bell. In most four/five star establishments the front desk agents would go out to the guest and meet the guest at the car. The front desk agent should be friendly and courteous at all times. This is where the front office and the uniformed services interact as the front desk and a porter is then called further assist the guest at their vehicle.

FRONT OFFICE MANAGEMENT



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INTRODUCTION TO HOTELS, COMMUNICATION AND FRONT OFFICE ORGANISATION

Block Introduction :

A hotel is often 'home away from home', and hospitality is essential for both the guest and the hotel. Guests expect and deserve hospitable treatment, and this involves not only a positive attitude but also offering products and services that make their stay enjoyable. Interdepartmental communication and coordination thus assume significance concerning how the front office relates with employees in other departments namely – marketing and sales, housekeeping, food and beverage, banquets, finance, maintenance, security, and human resources.

The hotel industry has evolved into its present form through modification of its services, architectural design and care for guests. The modern hotel aims to provide clean, hygienic and well-appointed rooms with quality services to its guests. The industry is so diverse and specialised that each hotel must have a unique selling proposition to survive in the business. Every hotel tries to establish itself as exceptional, offering the best service to its guests. The classification of hotels, thankfully helps tourists select hotels that meet their expectations.

The Front Office department of a hotel is responsible for developing and maintaining the guest database, coordinating guest services, and ensuring guest satisfaction. Employees in diverse areas of the front office perform these functions. Large hotels often organise the front office according to functions, with different employees handling each. This division of duties enhances the department's control over its operations.

Block Objectives :

- Categorise hotels based on size (room count), target market, levels of service and ownership and affiliation.
- Explain the importance of interdepartmental and intradepartmental communication and coordination.
- Relate the importance of Total Quality Management (TQM) in communication.
- List the various sections of the front office department.
- Classify the sections and layout of the front office.
- Illustrate the organisation of front office staff.
- Describe the duties of front-office employees.
- Define the qualities of front office personnel.

Block Structure :

Unit 1 : Classification of Hotels

Unit 2 : Interdepartmental Communication

Unit 3 : Front Office Organisation

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 1.0 Learning Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Classifying Hotels
 - 1.2.1 Size
 - 1.2.2 Target Markets
 - Check Your Progress 1
 - 1.2.3 Levels of Service
 - Check Your Progress 2
 - 1.2.4 Ownership and Affiliation
 - Check Your Progress 3
- 1.3 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.4 Answers For Check Your Progress
- 1.5 Glossary
- 1.6 Assignment
- 1.7 Activity
- 1.8 Case Study
- 1.9 Further Reading

1.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES :

- Classify hotels based on size (room count)
- Classify hotels based on the target market
- Classify hotels based on levels of service
- Classify hotels based on ownership and affiliation

1.1 INTRODUCTION :

The hotel or the hospitality industry is a part of a more significant umbrella industry called the tourism industry. The tourism industry is a vast industry consisting of various services and products whose common goal is to provide the best of it to the travellers.

Figure 1 divides the travel and tourism industry into five parts and shows some components of each element.

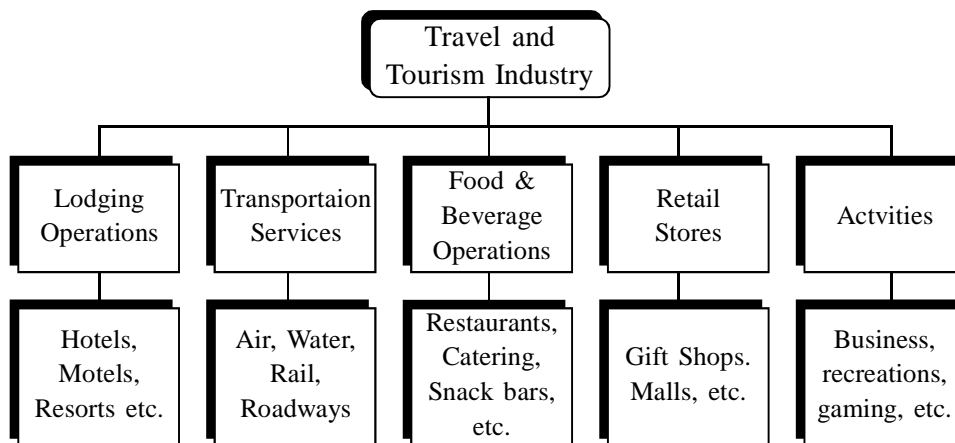


Fig. 1 : Overview of the Travel and Tourism Industry

The working knowledge of the different types of hotels is essential and core to the understanding of different kinds of hotels that are prevalent. To make the recognition more comfortable hotels are classified based on SIZE, TARGET MARKET / LOCATION, LEVELS OF SERVICE offered and OWNERSHIP AND AFFILIATION. Throughout the conversation, we will use these different groupings to understand the variety of services that are offered, the facilities provided by these hotels, and what amenities are preferred by the guest.

As a student of hospitality management, this knowledge remains core to the subsequent concepts and sections discussed further in the course. You are expected to know this and only then move forward.

The criteria for hotel classification discussed in the chapter are not rigid. They may change as per market, legal requirements, use of different terminology based on personal preference.

1.2 CLASSIFYING HOTELS :

Hotel : A hotel or inn is defined as "an establishment whose primary business is providing lodging facilities for the general public, and that furnishes one or more of the following services : food and beverage, room attendant (housekeeping), concierge, bell and door attendant, laundry and use of furniture and fixtures." (Kasavana 2017)

There are many ways to classify hotels. The categories discussed in this book are :

- Size
- Target Market
- Levels of Service
- Ownership and Affiliation

1.2.1 Size :

The most common method of categorising hotels is as per the size of the hotel, i.e. the number of guest rooms in a property. Hotels are classified in four size categories

- Small Hotels – under 150 rooms (The Oberoi Amarvilas, 102 rooms)
- Medium Hotels – between 150 to 200 rooms (Grand Mercure Vadodara)
- Large Hotels are between 300 and 600 rooms
- Very Large Hotels are more than 600 rooms.

The size categorising helps the hotels compare with each other in terms of facilities and amenities that they provide.

1.2.2 Target Markets :

Today the hotel owners, managers cannot satisfy all the customers or at least all the customers in the same manner. The guests today are too many and have a wide range of needs, wants and preferences based on the purpose of their travel. Every hotel company should be able to narrow down the type of guest or groups of guests that they are best suited to serve. According to Kotler et al. (2003), target marketing encompasses three different steps. The first is market segmentation which splits the market into diverse sets and identifies different ways to develop outlines of the resulting market segments. The second step is market directing by evaluating each segment's attractiveness and selecting one or more of the market segments. Furthermore, the last step will be market positioning, which is developing the product's competitive positioning and an appropriate marketing mix.

The process of market segmentation has led to substantial growth, particularly within the hotel companies. The trend is to find a sub-segment of guests within a more significant segment of the market and create unique products and services that satisfy that particular segment. For example, Taj now has many different brand names like TAJ, SeleQtions, Vivanta, Ginger, amā Stays & Trails, amā Stays & Trails. Each kind is directed toward a type of guest, or market segment, that Taj identified as distinct. The advantage of this is that a company can now have multiple hotels at the same location, thereby attracting various kinds of guests.

❖ **Commercial Hotel :**

Commercial hotels tend to be located in downtown or the industrial areas of the city that are convenient for the people who are interested in the business fraternity.

The services and amenities offered by these hotels are tuned toward satisfying the needs of business guests. Typical facilities in a business hotel are :

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Complimentary Newspapers | 24 HR Coffee Shop |
| In-room Tea Coffee Making Facility | Multiple Dining Options |
| Free Local Telephone Calls | Bar & Lounge Services |
| High-Speed Internet Service | Small Conference Rooms |
| WiFi | 24 Hr. Laundry Valet Services |
| Ergonomic Desks and Chairs | Concierge Services |
| Fax Machines | Uniform Services |
| Car Rental, Airport Pick Up & Drop | Swimming Pools, Health Clubs |

❖ **Airport Hotels :**

Travel became very fast due to these aircraft's ability to fly fast, and that propelled rapid economic growth in the United States. Demand for hotels near the airport hit the roof, especially near international airports.

As these hotels are near the airport, they are popular. Further than any other type of hotel, airport hotels diverge broadly in size and level of services. The variety of guests visiting airport hotels are

Front Office Management

- Business guests
- Airline passengers with an overnight layover
- Airline passengers with cancelled flights

❖ **Suite Hotels :**

One of the most growing markets of the hotel industry is suite hotels. Suite hotels feature a guest room with a living room and or a parlour area and a separate bedroom. The guest room areas are more significant than in the public space. Suite hotels are designed with privacy and convenience of non-standard hotel accommodations with families in mind also.

Suite hotel has many market segments

- People who are relocating
- Frequent travellers enjoy the comforts of a "home away from home."
- Vacationing family
- Authorities such as accountants, lawyers, and executives find the place attractive as they can work in peace and can entertain their business associates and clients in the area outside the bedroom.

❖ **Extended Stay Hotels / Service Apartments :**

Extended stay hotels are similar to the suite hotels, but they have slightly elaborated kitchen amenities in the guest room. Extended stay hotel rooms are designed for those guests who want to stay for more than a week and use less of hotel services. These hotels do not provide food & beverage service, uniform service or valet service. Besides, housekeeping services are not offered daily. Extended stay hotels try to create a home-like atmosphere through their interior and exterior designs. Room rates of these types of hotels are based on the length of the stay of the guest.

❖ **Residential Hotels :**

Residential hotels provide long term or permanent accommodation for people in urban or suburban areas. Located primarily in the US and now famous all over the world, these hotels attract people who want and can find the money for daily limited hotel service.

Amenities Provided :

- Daily Tidying, telephone, front desk, and uniformed services.

❖ **Resort Hotel :**

The recreational facilities and breath-taking scenery typical of most resorts are not usual of most other hotels.

Facilities Provided :

- Great food and beverage, valet and room services for vacationers. Many also provide special recreational activities for guests, such as dancing golf, tennis, horseback riding, nature hikes, sailing, and swimming,

❖ **Lifestyle Hotels :**

The Boutique and Lifestyle Lodging Association (BLLA), defines Lifestyle Hotels thus – "Lifestyle hotels are the next generation of boutique hotels. Driven by the chains, they borrow the best elements of boutiques. Small, intimate and modern – and throw in advantages only a chain can offer, like loyalty perks,

consistency and economies of scale. As a result, lifestyle hotels are generally more affordable and accessible than boutiques – and soon to be ubiquitous".

❖ **Bed & Breakfast Hotels :**

The Bed and breakfast hotels range from houses with a few rooms converted to overnight facilities, to small commercial buildings with twenty to thirty guestrooms. The owner of a B&B, the host or the hostess, usually lives on the premises and is typically the property manager. Breakfast service may range from continental breakfast to full course meal.

❖ **Vacation Ownership & Condominium Hotels :**

A timeshare (sometimes called vacation ownership) is defined as an accommodation having a divided form of ownership wherein each owner has access to it at different times of the year.

It is a cheaper alternative to owning a property year-round and paying for the maintenance and is typically located in resort destinations. The concept allows people a second vacation home every year.

❖ **Casino Hotels :**

Hotels with gambling facilities may be categorised as a distinct group. Although the food and beverage service and accommodation service is very luxurious, they are supplementary to gaming operations. Casino hotels attract guests by promoting gaming and headliner entertainment.

❖ **Conference Centres :**

While many hotels provide a meeting space, conference centres are specifically designed to handle group meetings. Most full-service conference centres offer overnight accommodations for meeting attendees. Because meetings are their essential market segment, the conference centres have all the facilities, amenities and infrastructure that make the meeting successful.

Facilities – Internet access via WiFi to all the attendees, technical production assistance, high-quality audio-visual equipment, business service centres, flexible seating arrangements, flip charts and display screens.

❖ **Convention Hotels :**

Convention hotels form an alternative segment of the lodging business that has grown significantly in recent years; demand for the convention market has nearly doubled in the past 20 years. Most commercial hotels have around 600 rooms. Convention hotels can accommodate up to 2000 places or more.

Facilities – 50000 Sq. Ft. or more of exhibition space, plus ballrooms and an assortment of meeting rooms. Most food and beverage service are of variety from fine-dine to self-service restaurants. A full range of business services is generally available, including teleconferencing, secretarial assistance, language translation, high-speed Internet access and audio-visual equipment.

❑ **Check Your Progress – 1 :**

1. Identification of smaller groups within a target market to develop products and services to satisfy these groups is called :

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| (A) Franchising | (B) Market segmentation |
| (C) Demand marketing | (D) Supply marketing |

**Front Office
Management**

2. Extended-stay hotels offer :
(A) several kinds of food and beverage services
(B) recreational and exercise facilities
(C) conference and meeting rooms
(D) limited housekeeping services
3. In _____ hotels, the food and beverage services and rooms are supplementary services.
(A) airport (B) resort
(C) casino (D) conference/convention
4. Multiple ownership that allows cheaper ownership of the accommodation is called :
(A) Condominium Hotels (B) Bed & Breakfast Hotels
(C) Lifestyle Hotels (D) Resort Hotels
5. _____ hotels provide long term or permanent accommodation for people in urban or suburban areas
(A) Extended Stay (B) Resort
(C) Limited Service (D) Residential
6. Paramount Hotels has 56 rooms. It is qualified as _____ hotel (in terms of size)
(A) Small (B) Medium (C) Large (D) Very Large
7. Pleasure/Leisure travellers would most likely wish to stay at :
(A) Airport hotels (B) Resort hotels
(C) Residential hotels (D) Convention hotels
8. Vacationing families prefer _____ hotels
(A) Resort (B) Suite (C) Suburban (D) Village
9. Airline passengers with overnight layover stay in _____ hotels
(A) Airport (B) Commercial
(C) Casino (D) Bed & Breakfast Hotels
10. Market segmentation divides a market into different _____.
(A) Sections (B) Castes (C) Age groups (D) Income groups

1.2.3 Levels of Service :

Hotels may be classified based on the levels of service they offer to their guests. Levels of service provided by hotels do not reflect the target market, size or type of ownership. Before we discuss different levels of service of the hotel, let us talk about some features related to service.

The Intangibility of Service – Products are tangible, and Services are intangible. The intangibility of services is resulting from the fact that you cannot see or touch a service. A service is made and distributed on the spot, and hence it cannot be measured as easily as a tangible product.

Quality Assurance – The intangible services that a hotel delivers tend to be less standardised than the tangible objects produced by the manufacturer. A significant challenge faced by the hotel industry is to control the quality of

services delivered. Consistency of services can be achieved by following the quality assurance program of the hotel.

In the service industry, quality assurance is simply a matter of having employees take ownership of following the rules set to comply with the brand requirements. Forced adoption is the fastest way to compliance; however, it is also the quickest route to discontinuance. There should be proper, transparent process and measurable standards to follow at all times.

Rating Service – Every country/continent has different popular rating services and has credibility in the market. Rating services that are government-controlled and some are independent services that try to give a clear picture of the quality of the services and products that are provided by the establishment. Some rating service across the world are AAA (American Automobile Association) in America, HRACC (Hotel & Restaurant Approval & Classification Committee) in India, Michelin's The Red Guide in Europe.

It is extremely difficult for a hotel or a restaurant to earn the highest rating. Standards are strict and include consistency of services in the quality of facilities from year to year. For the sake of simplicity, lodging properties can be discussed in terms of four different levels of services – World Class, Upscale, Mid-Market and Economy/Limited Service.

❖ **World Class Service :**

Target Market – Hotels are offering world-class service – sometimes called luxury service – target top business executive, entertainments celebrities, high ranking political figures, and wealthy clientele as their primary markets.

❖ **Upscale Service**

Upscale service hotels are frequented by tourist seeking exceptional service and accommodation, but not at the level of world-class hotels.

Target Market – The primary client are business executives, high-level industry meeting, attendees, and leisure travellers interested in the extra comforts and amenities of these hotels. In any case, upscale service hotels are generally less expensive than world-class service hotels.

❖ **Mid-Range Service :**

Hotels offering mid-range service, appeal to the largest segment of travellers. Mid-range service is often modest but considered sufficient. Despite having adequate staffing levels, the mid-range hotels do not provide elaborate services, although they may offer uniformed guest services, including room service. Like world-class and upscale hotels, mid-range properties range in size from small to large.

Target Market – Guests likely to stay at a mid-range hotel include business people, individual travellers, and families. Rates are lower than in world-class hotels.

❖ **Economy/Limited Service :**

This segment of the hotel industry has seen growth in the recent past. These properties meet the basic needs of the guests by offering clean, comfortable and inexpensive rooms. Economy hotels appeal primarily to budget-minded travellers who seek rooms with minimal amenities (required for a comfortable stay) and avoid unnecessary (and often costly) extra services. Since a large proportion of

Front Office Management

the population travels on a limited budget, economy hotels have a potentially large market from which to attract clientele.

Target Market – Families with children, bus tour group, travelling business people, vacationers, retirees, and groups of conventioners.

❑ **Check Your Progress – 2 :**

1. Hotels that employ a relatively high ratio of staff members to guests are likely to provide _____ service.

(A) economy/limited (B) mid-range
(C) world-class (D) quality
2. This type of hotel is the least likely to offer uniformed guest services.

(A) World-class service hotels (B) First-class service hotels
(C) Mid-range service hotels (D) Economy/limited-service hotels
3. Service quality levels in hotels is determined by :

(A) Independent rating services. (B) Increase service variability.
(C) Consistent service delivery. (D) the variety of amenities offered
4. Rates of _____ service hotels are less than upscale service hotels

(A) Economy/limited (B) mid-range
(C) world-class (D) quality
5. _____ service hotels are the most growing segment of the market

(A) Economy/limited (B) mid-range
(C) world-class (D) quality

1.2.4 Ownership and Affiliation :

Ownership and affiliation provide another means of classifying hotel property.

- Independent Hotels
- Chain Hotels

❖ **Independent Hotels :**

Independent hotels have no identifiable ownership or management affiliation with other properties. In other words, independent hotels have no relationship to other hotels regarding policies, procedures, marketing, or financial obligations.

Advantages	Disadvantages
1. It is an autonomous body. Does not have to adhere to any particular image. 2. Can offer any level of service or facilities that may deem fit for the owner.	1. May not enjoy the broad advertising exposure 2. Does not have a team of management insight 3. Is unable to take the volume purchasing power of a chain hotel

Example : The Imperial Hotel, New Delhi

❖ **Chain Hotel :**

Chain ownership may typically impose specific minimum standards, rules, policies, and procedures on individual affiliated hotels to restrict affiliate activities. Generally, the more centralised a chain organisation, the stronger the control over an individual hotel.

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 2.0 Learning Objectives**
- 2.1 Introduction**
- 2.2 Role of Front Office**
- 2.3 Marketing and Sales Department**
- 2.4 Housekeeping Department**
- 2.5 Food and Beverage Department**
- 2.6 Banquet Department**
- 2.7 Accounts**
- 2.8 Maintenance or Engineering Department**
- 2.9 Security Department**
- 2.10 Human Resources Management Department**
- 2.11 Role of Total Quality Management In Effective Communication**
- Check Your Progress 1**
- 2.12 Let Us Sum Up**
- 2.13 Answers For Check Your Progress**
- 2.14 Glossary**
- 2.15 Assignment**
- 2.16 Activity**
- 2.17 Case Study**
- 2.18 Further Reading**

2.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES :

This unit discusses the need and importance of coordination and communication between the front office and other departments. After completing this unit, you will be able to :

- Explain the need and importance of interdepartmental and intradepartmental coordination and communication.
- List the reasons for communication between the front office and various other departments.
- Relate the importance of TQM in communication.

2.1 INTRODUCTION :

This unit explains the interdepartmental communications that must be maintained in a hotel. Notably, it focuses on how the front office relates to employees in all departments – housekeeping, marketing and sales, food and beverage, banquets, finance, human resources, maintenance and security. Guest needs are best met when employees come together to provide hotel services. The

front office manager must objectively view any communication keeping guests needs in mind and operational policies and procedures.

The front office department's role in delivering hospitality to guests is pivotal as it sets the stage for a pleasant or an unpleasant stay. Guests often want to proceed with their business or vacation plans and wish to learn all about their new environment. Requests for information usually begin with the concierge bellhop, telephone operator or front desk attendant since they are the most visible. They are perceived to be knowledgeable and have their finger on the pulse of the hotel and its surroundings. How they respond to guests' requests for information on public transportation, location of hotel facilities, special events in the city etc. indicate how well the hotel has prepared them for this vital role. Front office duty managers must take an active part in gathering information that will be of interest to guests.

Front Office Manager must also be involved in developing procedures and processes for the front office to disburse this information. The relationships the front office manager and the duty manager develop with the other department heads, and employees are vital in gathering information for guests. One way is to develop positive personal relationships, although this alone may not be enough to ensure accurate information is relayed. So how does the front office manager encourage effective interdepartmental communication (communication between departments) ? We discuss this as well as intradepartmental communication (communication inside a department).

2.2 ROLE OF FRONT OFFICE :

The front office is at the centre of the information network and coordinates with the many interdepartmental lines of communication that exist. These lines are based on the kind of hospitality each department offers to guests. These include clean rooms, properly operating equipment, safety, well-prepared food and beverages, efficient service and accurate accounting of guest charges. These general objectives help department heads organise their operations and meet the overall goal of delivering professional hospitality. Though, constant effort is required to manage the details of employees, materials, procedures and communication skills to produce the right products and services. The front office staff interact with all departments of the hotel, including marketing and sales, housekeeping, food and beverage, banquet, finance, maintenance, security, and human resources. For these departments, the front office is a communication liaison in providing guest services. Each department has a unique communication link with the front office staff. The front office, in turn, always becomes the face of hospitality for guests. Guests usually approach the front office staff for the services of other departments. The front office team must know and direct guest inquiries to relevant staff in other departments. They learn this through training programs on in-house policy and procedures.

Let us look at how the front office coordinates with other departments and how these impact efficiencies.

2.3 MARKETING AND SALES DEPARTMENT :

The marketing and sales department gets data on guest histories and visits from the front office. Such information is based on the frequency of visits, corporate affiliation and special needs. It is also the front office department's job to make an excellent first impression on every single person entering the hotel,

Front Office Management

including relaying messages and meeting guest requests of those attending meetings and banquets. Guest history is considered a valuable resource for marketing and sales. Information obtained from guest registration (details on the registration card filled by the guest during check-in) is used to develop marketing campaigns, promotions, mailing lists and selection of advertising media. The front office staff is responsible for keeping this database accurate and updated. Completing the booking of a function (such as a wedding reception, convention or seminar) depends on the availability of rooms. The marketing and sales staff may have to check the lists of available rooms three or six months, or even a year in the future to be sure that the hotel is in a position to accommodate the expected number of guests. The front office maintains a database of available rooms in the property management system.

Usually the first guest contact with the marketing and sales department is through the hotel's telephone operator. A competent operator who is friendly and knowledgeable about hotel operations and personnel makes an excellent first impression by conveying to the prospective client that the hotel is competent and efficient in its operations. When guests finally arrive for the function, the first contact is usually through the front office staff. The front office associate who determines which banquet supervisor is in charge and communicates that information to that guest demonstrates to all that the hotel is dedicated to providing hospitality. Messages for the marketing and sales staff must be conveyed accurately, and quickly as these could (and mostly are) related to new business ties and corporate contracts. The telephone operator and the front desk associate is a vital link in the communication between the prospective client and a salesperson in the marketing and sales department.

The duty manager should instruct new front office personnel about the marketing and sales staff their roles.

Front office employees should know the names of all marketing and sales employees. Requests for service at conferences and banquets are often made at the front office. The banquet manager or a banquet sales associate responsible for guest requirements might be busy with another function. If a guest needs a specific equipment such as an extension cord or if an electrical outlet malfunctions, the front desk staff must be ready to cater to guest requests. Standard operating procedures are established by the front office manager for staff to contact related departments to meet common demands. Knowing where to find materials and services will aid speedy redressal of guest requests and save the time involved in tracking down the banquet sales or service in-charge.

2.4 HOUSEKEEPING DEPARTMENT :

Housekeeping and the front office communicate about room status and report on the availability of guestrooms for occupancy. Housekeeping communicates room status using the following terms :

- Available Clean or Ready – room is available to be occupied
- Occupied – when guest(s) occupy a room
- Stay over – guest would not be checking out from a room on the current day
- Dirty or On-Change – guest has checked out, but housekeeping is yet to release the room

- Out-of-Order – the room is unavailable due to a mechanical malfunction

Housekeeping and front office also communicate on the house count (a report of the total number of guests residing in the hotel), any security concerns and requests for amenities such as personal toiletry or electrical equipment. Room status is reported directly (face-to-face) in a hotel that does not use a Property Management System (PMS). The regular visits of the housekeeper to the front desk clerk are a familiar scene in such hotels. Room status is reported at the end of the day using a discrepancy report by the housekeeper, listing the occupancy status as vacant, occupied, or out of order. Occasionally when guests may be anxiously waiting to occupy a room, the front desk attendant telephones the floor supervisor to determine the time taken to finish servicing the room.

The housekeeper relies on the room sales forecast – a weekly report prepared and distributed by the front office manager that indicates the number of departures, arrivals, walk-in, no-shows and stayovers – to schedule employees. Timely projection of room sales assists the housekeeper in planning employee leaves and vacation days. The housekeeping personnel also reports unusual circumstances that may indicate a violation of security for the guests. Suppose a room attendant notices non-registered guests on a floor, suspicious activity, an open fire exit, or signs of disturbance within a guest room, he or she must report these to the front desk. They, in turn, relay the information to an in-house or civil authority. The front office manager may direct front desk attendants and telephone operators to call floor supervisors for a periodic check on the guest floor activities. Guest may request for additional or special amenities and guest room supplies at the front desk. The prompt relay of these requests to housekeeping is essential to ensure efficient service.

2.5 FOOD AND BEVERAGE DEPARTMENT :

Food and beverage department and the front office communicate regularly. Charge transfers, which are forms used to communicate a charge to a guest's account, are used to relay messages and provide accurate information. Communication activities also include reporting predicted house counts, a forecast of the number of guests expected to check-in 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 public. Incoming messages for the food and beverage manager and executive chef from vendors and other industry representatives are essential to the business operation of the food and beverage department. Suppose the telephone operator is given instructions on screening callers (such as times when the executive chef cannot be disturbed because of a busy workload, or vendors in whom the chef is not interested). In such cases, important messages can receive priority. In hotels with Point-of-Sale (POS) terminals (computerised cash registers that interface with a property management system), guest charges are automatically posted to a guest folio (record of charges and payments).

When a hotel does not have POS terminals, the desk attendant posts accurate charges on the guest folio and relies on transfer slips. The night auditor's job is made easy if the transfer slip is accurately prepared and posted. The front office manager should work with the food and beverage director in developing standard operating procedures and methods to complete the transfer of charges.

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The supervisors in the food and beverage department rely on the predicted house count prepared by the front office manager to schedule employees and forecast sales. For example, a restaurant supervisor working the breakfast shift may want to know how many guests will be in the hotel to schedule a certain number of servers for breakfast service. Timely and accurate communication helps in staffing control and sales predictions. Authorised members of the food and beverage department occasionally ask the front office for cash, in the form of a paid-out, to purchase last-minute items for a banquet, the lounge or the restaurant or to take advantage of unexpected opportunities to promote hospitality. Specific guidelines concerning cash limits, turnaround time, prior approval, authorised signatures, and purchase receipts are developed by the general manager and front office manager. These guidelines help maintain control of paid outs.

2.6 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 office staff prepares the daily announcement board listing the day's activities (group, room/hall, time). This message board usually includes the logo of the hotel and has space for event listings. It is placed at a visible location near the entrance so that banquet guests (who may not be registered guests in the hotel) and employees, get relevant information at a glance. The front office is a logical communications centre. The preparation of the board may include congratulatory, welcome, sales promotion, or other important messages. Sometimes, the marketing and sales department prepares the messages for the message board. A banquet guest unfamiliar with the hotel will ask for directions at the front office. This service might seem minor in the overall scheme of things, but it is essential to the lost or confused guest. The front office staff must not only know directions to a meeting room, but also which event is being held in which room. Front desk attendants must be able to provide information for all departmental activities in the hotel. The person responsible for paying the bills for a special event may also end up in the front office for settlement. Suppose the banquet captain is not available to present the bill for the function personally. In that case, the front desk attendant should be informed about the specifics of food and beverage charges, rental charges, method of payment, and the like.

2.7 ACCOUNTS :

The cost-controller/auditor (a position in the accounts department) relies on the front office staff to provide a daily summary of financial transactions in the form of a night audit report. This report also helps measure the management's ability to meet budgetary targets. Because the front office provides the controller with financial data for billing and maintenance of credit card and city ledgers, these two departments must relay payments and charges through the property management system. The information generated by the front office department is the first step in the guest accounting process. Without accurate daily entry by desk attendants and generation of a night audit, the controller would be unable to generate reports for the owners, general manager and supervisors. Although this communication is in the form of reports, the front office and controller often communicate orally. They share a common concern for guest hospitality, and when finances are concerned, an oral discussion is inevitable.

2.8 MAINTENANCE OR ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT :

The front office communicates room status and requests for maintenance service to the maintenance or engineering department. This helps maintenance employees know the occupancy status of a room before attending to plumbing, heating, or air-conditioning problems. If a room is reserved, the two departments work out a period so the guest can enter the room on arrival or be assigned an alternate room. Department staff must communicate with each other to provide guest services seamlessly. Guests request the desk attendants/telephone operators for the repair of HVAC (heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning) units, plumbing, televisions, and other room furnishings, who then relay them to the maintenance department. The front desk attendant must keep track of the repair schedule, as guests would want to know when the repair would be made.

2.9 SECURITY DEPARTMENT :

Communications between the security and the front office are essential in ensuring guests are safe and secure. The cooperation of these departments are needed for fire safety measures and emergency communication systems, as well as procedures for routine investigation of guest security concerns. Because of the recent series of unfortunate events, the nature of the security hotels offers their guests has changed. Front office staff must be on alert for people who do not belong in the lobby and report inconsistencies to the security department. Doing so would be seen as being supportive of security.

2.10 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT :

The front office staff may act as an initial point of contact for potential employees. Human resources may sometimes ask the front office to screen job candidates. In such cases, guidelines for and training in screening methods must be provided. Guidelines to screen candidates include those on personal hygiene, completion of an application, educational requirements, experience and citizenship status. Front office sometimes distributes application forms and other personnel-related information to job applicants. A potential employee may seek directions to the human resources office at the front desk.

2.11 ROLE OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION :

Total quality management (TQM) is a management technique that encourages managers to observe processes used to deliver products and services critically. In this technique, managers encourage frontline employees and supervisors to question each step in the process of providing hospitality to guests. Examples : "Why do guests complain about having to wait during check out ?" "Why do guests complain that our table service is below par ?" "Why do guests get annoyed when their rooms aren't ready on check-in ?" Managers and employees together seek answers to these questions. TQM was developed by W. Edwards Deming, a management theorist, in the early 1950s to help American manufacturers improve the quality of their products by reducing defects through worker participation in the planning process. The American manufacturers were reluctant to embrace it at first, but the Japanese were quick to adopt this technique to manufacture automobiles. Deming gave managers tools such as flowcharts to analyse production by dividing the manufacturing process into components and

Front Office Management

then focusing on the segments of processes that produce the product. TQM's relevance to the hotel industry was in the context of the interaction between frontline employees and their supervisors. When employees in a group setting or on a one-on-one basis interacted to determine the root cause of a problem, it ushered an atmosphere of cooperation which resulted in the achievement of desired results. First-shift and second-shift employees, who usually did not understand each other's activities, found they did have shared concerns about serving the guest. Housekeeping and front desk employees came to realise that a guest's request for a late checkout plays havoc with the delivery of hospitality. Total quality management practices thus ensure that the front office checks with housekeeping to determine room availability in such a situation. Interdepartmental communication improves every time a team of employees from different departments meet to analyse a challenge to the delivery of a product or service. While a guest is checking out, she indicates a dripping faucet in that room. After the guest departs, the desk attendant brushes off her remark, saying to a fellow desk attendant that there were so many dripping faucets in this hotel that one more wouldn't change anything. Assuming you are the manager and heard this comment, what would you do ?

❖ An Example of Total Quality Management in a Hotel :

Suppose the general manager has received numerous complaints about the messy appearance of the lobby—furniture and cushions are out of place, ashtrays and trash receptacles are overflowing and flowers are wilted. The front office manager organises a total quality management team, consisting of a front desk attendant, a housekeeping attendant, a waiter, a cashier and the director of marketing and sales. The team discuss how the lobby area could be better maintained. The housekeeping attendant says his colleagues are overworked and are allotted only 15 minutes to clean up the public areas on the day shift. The front desk attendant says he would often like to take a few minutes to go out to the lobby to straighten the furniture and pillows, but he is not allowed to leave the front desk unattended. The director of marketing and sales shares her embarrassment when a prospective client is greeted with such a mess. She has requested housekeeping several times to have the lobby cleaned but is told, "It's not in the budget to have the lobby cleaned six times a day." All team members realise that the untidy lobby does create a poor impression about the hotel, and that the situation should be remedied. The team decides to look at the multiple elements in the case. The furniture is on castors for ease of moving when the housekeeping staff cleans.

The cushions add a decorative touch to the environment, but they are usually scattered around. The server jokingly says, "Let's sew them to the back and arms of the seats!" Could the ashtrays be removed, and receptacles added for guests to extinguish a cigarette ? Would a larger waste receptacle with a swinging lid be better to avoid misplaced litter ? "The fresh flowers are great," adds one of the team members, "but many hotels use silk flowers and plants. This could save money over a period of time." The team discussion encourages each staff member to understand why the housekeeping attendant cannot straighten the lobby every two or three hours and why the desk attendant cannot leave his desk to take care of the problem. The staff comments concerning furniture and appointments foster an atmosphere of understanding. Team members start empathising with one another and are slower to criticise. Was the issue of the messy lobby resolved ? Yes, but more importantly, the team members developed

- Illustrate the duties of front-office employees
- Describe qualities of front office personnel

3.1 INTRODUCTION :

Front Office is the interface between a hotel and its guests. On arrival at a hotel first, meet the front office staff and develop an impression about the level of services, standard, facilities, and hospitality of the hotel. The guest interacts with the front office staff throughout the stay for all kinds of information and to avail different services of the hotel. The front office staff is responsible for reservation, check-in of the guest, room and escorting guest on arrival and maintaining a high level of guest service and professionalism.

3.2 FRONT OFFICE FUNCTIONS :

Front Office is the communication point between the guest, management and other departments. It handles guest complaints, dispatches housekeeping and engineering requests, prints and files reports, receives and answers phone calls. Thus, the front office staffs do the following functions.

- Sell hotel rooms and upsell other services of the hotel.
- Record bookings of the hotel rooms received from various distribution channels
- Welcome guest on arrival. Perform the process of registration, assign rooms to the guest. Escort the guest to the room and explain the various services of the hotel. Do the room orientation and make the guest comfort in the room.
- Preserve accurate room status information.
- Maintain guest account and monitor credit.
- Handle guests demand and complaints
- Prepare account statements of the guest.

3.3 SECTIONS AND LAYOUT OF FRONT OFFICE :

For the smooth functioning of a section, it is essential to divide into sections and delegate tasks accordingly.

The hotel lobby is the furnished front area of the hotel where guests can wait before going to the hotel, and visitors can meet the guest. Located next to the entrance is the first and last point of contact for the guest. A beautiful and well-designed lobby creates a great first impression of the overall standards of the hotel. Hotels spend a great deal of money, creating an aesthetically appealing lobby. The lobby is part of the front office department.

3.3.1 Reservations Department :

While planning corporate or leisure trips, people like to ensure that they have safe and comfortable accommodation at their destinations. It is possible by reserving the room in advance. Functions of the Reservation section are

- Receiving reservation requests through different modes like telephone, fax, email, websites, sales representatives, or central reservations department.
- Recording the reservation information from all sources on PMS (Property Management Software).

ENGLISH FOR HOTEL MANAGEMENT

**Dwi Iswahyuni
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 **GRAHA ILMU**

ENGLISH FOR HOTEL MANAGEMENT

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CHAPTER 2

HOTEL ORGANIZATION: FRONT OFFICE

2.1 A Brief Overview

A hotel organization consists of several departments. Although each department has its duties or responsibilities, all departments should work cooperatively one another since they are unity. In other words, hotel operations should be well organized.

One of the departments in a hotel is the front office. The front office is positioned on the front side of the hotel. This department takes a very significant role since it welcomes the guests and becomes an information center. Also, the front office staffs should have good demeanor because they will reflect the first impression of a hotel (Sutisna, 2008).

The front office department has several main duties. First, it sells rooms. Here, this department processes reservations and all communications with persons looking for accommodation in the hotel. Second, as front desk, it enrolls guests and assigns rooms. Third, as a service function, it handles all mail, telegrams, and messages for guests; provides information; keeping the accounts of guests, rendering bills, and receiving payments thereof (Negi, 2014).

Moreover, there are several main functions of front office such as selling accommodation and facilities in the hotel; receiving and registering incoming guest; organizing the guest check out including settlement of

CHAPTER 3

FRONT OFFICE ACTIVITIES: RECEPTIONIST

3.1. A Brief Overview

Receptionist belongs to front office department. The receptionist can be defined as a person who registers guests, allocates room for guests, handles all messages for guests, updates the room rack including the in-house guests, and makes a list of the guests who want to leave the hotel (Sutisna, 2008). Moreover, the jobs of a hotel receptionist include welcoming guests as they arrive, assigning rooms to guests, giving guests their keys, taking and passing on messages, checking guests in and out of the hotel, handling foreign exchange, preparing guests' bills and taking payments, and assisting guests with any special requests (Negi, Jagmohan M.J., 2013). In other words, the duties of a receptionist encompass welcoming the guests, registering guests, handling the room bookings, and helping guests of any special requests.

Some several activities are undertaken by a receptionist when a guest arrives in the hotel (Negi, 2014) are as follows.

1. Checking the day's arrival rack that the guest has a reservation when a guest arrives;
2. Checking the correspondence in the file and giving registration card to the guest;

3. Asking the guest to write information on the grc (guest registration card) or sign the register;
4. Taking a card from the guest check and completing it;
5. Checking and assigning the ready room;
6. Preparing a welcome card;
7. Checking mail or message, if any; and
8. Giving the key to the guest.

3.2 Conversation

Practice the following conversations!

Guest Check-in (1)

Receptionist : "Good afternoon Sir, may I help you?"

Guest : "Good afternoon. I am Steve Gerald. I have a reservation for five days."

Receptionist : "Welcome to Cozy Hotel, Mr. Gerald. Would you fill this registration form?"

Guest : "Of course."

Receptionist : "Thank you, Mr. Gerald. Here is your key, the keycard, and a bellboy will escort you to the room, have a nice stay with us."

(Sutisna, 2008)

Guest Check-in (2)

Receptionist : "Good morning, Sir. May I help you?"

Guest : "Good morning. Can I have a room tonight for two days?"

Receptionist : "Certainly, Sir. May I have your name please?"

Guest : "I am John Bill."

Receptionist : "Alright, Mr. Bill, there is a single room until May 10th. Could you fill in this registration form while I prepare your key?"

Guest : "Sure. Let me see...hmm...why do you need this passport details?"



FRONT OFFICE MANAGEMENT



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About the Tutorial

Front Office Management in the hotel industry involves the work of reserving accommodations in the hotel, registering guests, maintaining guest accounts with the hotel, night auditing, and coordination with various other departments for providing best guest services.

This tutorial teaches the basic terms related to the front office department of the hotel. After going through this tutorial, you will find yourself at a moderate level of expertise of tourism basics from where you can take yourself to next levels.

Audience

This tutorial is prepared for the beginners to help them understand the basics of a hotel's front office management. The ones who are keen on taking up career in hospitality reception, this tutorial is resourceful. For all other enthusiastic readers, this tutorial is a good learning material.

Prerequisites

We assume the reader has interest and inclination towards hotel and reception. A passion for excellent service provision and good communication skills are a plus.

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1. Front Office – Introduction

Every multi-departmental physical business needs to have a front office or reception to receive the visitors. Front Office Department is the face and as well as the voice of a business. Regardless of the star rating of the hotel or the hotel type, the hotel has a front office as its most visible department. For a business such as hospitality, the front office department comes with an aspect of elevating customer experience with the business.

Front Office department is a common link between the customers and the business. Let us learn more about it.

What is Front Office Department?

It is the one of the many departments of the hotel business which directly interacts with the customers when they first arrive at the hotel. The staff of this department is very visible to the guests.

Front office staff handles the transactions between the hotel and its guests. The staff receives the guests, handles their requests, and strikes the first impression about the hotel into their minds.



Front office department includes:

- Front Desk
- Uniformed services
- Concierges
- Front Office Accounting System
- Private Branch Exchange (PBX), a private telephone network used within an organization

Basic Responsibilities of Front Office Department

Following are the most basic responsibilities a front office can handle.

- Creating guest database
- Handling guest accounts
- Coordinating guest service
- Trying to sell a service
- Ensuring guest satisfaction
- Handling in-house communication through PBX

Front Office Operations

There are two categories of Front Office Operations:

Front-House Operations

These operations are visible to the guests of the hotel. The guests can interact and see these operations, hence, the name Front-House operations. Few of these operations include:

- Interacting with the guests to handle request for an accommodation.
- Checking accommodation availability and assigning it to the guest.
- Collecting detail information while guest registration.
- Creating a guest's account with the FO accounting system.
- Issuing accommodation keys to the guest.
- Settling guest payment at the time of check-out.

Back-House Operations

Front Office staff conducts these operations in the absence of the guests or when the guest's involvement is not required. These operations involve activities such as:

- Determining the type of guest (fresh/repeat) by checking the database.
- Ensuring preferences of the guest to give a personal touch to the service.
- Maintaining guest's account with the accounting system.

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Responsibility: Individual

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“Responsibility” is a word of Latin origin, *re+ spondere*, which literally means *to promise* a thing *in return* for something else, *to offer* or *present in return* (Cicero [1942](#), § 101, I.48.212); in a more general signification, it means to *answer*, *reply*, or *respond*. Today, the common meaning of “responsibility” is to be “accountable for one’s own actions,” accountable or answerable for something within one’s initiative, power, control, or management.

The notion of “responsibility,” or the idea the noun expresses today, has a long history. Nevertheless, the word itself is fairly new: although it is possible to find it occasionally from the sixteenth century on (mainly as a trace of character or a quality and therefore presented as an adjective), it was only in the second half of the eighteenth century that it began to appear frequently, mainly (as a noun) in texts of legal and also often of a broad political nature. Indeed, from a historical perspective, “responsibility” firstly assumes a legal meaning, and it will be quite later, already in the second half of the twentieth century, that a more demanding moral meaning will also impose itself at the technical level and by public opinion.

On the Path of Responsibility

One can go back in history to the ancient Greek philosophy, for instance, to Plato ([1932](#), X, 617e) and Aristotle ([1983](#), III, 7, 1113b), and find, under the Greek word *aitios*, which translates literally to authorship or cause, the same meaning nowadays expressed by the word “responsibility,” that is a direct relation between the agent, as cause, and the outcome of his free action. The same idea prevails throughout the Middle Ages and modernity and is also expressed in contemporaneity by Kant, in his *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), under the word *verantworten*, that is, “to answer for.” This verb is at the root of the German noun *Verantwortlichkeit*, that is, “responsibility” (Kant [2002](#)).

This thought of a direct cause between the agent and his/her action is implicitly present throughout the history of philosophy. Nevertheless, to be explicitly defined in the concept of responsibility and in the consequences it entails, it needed a previous systematic and well-developed reflection on liberty, which takes place in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, namely, with Kant and Stuart Mill who ground responsibility on liberty. Only liberty can establish a direct cause between the agent and his/her action, the agent and the outcome of his/her action; only liberty can make the agent responsible. Before Kant, under a heterologous moral law (in which the principle of action is exterior to man, such as nature or God), man could only choose between alternatives posed to him (free will); he, himself, could not be the author or the principle (cause) of an action which, in this case, under the agent initiative, would be undetermined (liberty).

In fact, one can even take a step back in the reconstruction of the favorable conditions for the definition of “responsibility” by discovering the need for self-consciousness preceding the exercise of liberty. It is only within the trilogy “conscience,” “liberty,” and “responsibility” that

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ETHICS IN ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Antonio Argandoña

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ETHICS IN ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Antonio Argandoña¹

Abstract

Social responsibility (SR) in the field of healthcare can learn a lot from the evolution of the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR). The “responsibility” component was originally an ethical concept that, when looking at the past, addresses the consequences of actions and, when looking at the future, addresses the responsibility for what is going to be done or must be done. It is, therefore, a good guide for understanding SR. The “social” part of the term also started out as a moral concept in interpersonal relationships. It later attributed an active role to society, whose demands identify situations that give rise to rights that create responsibilities. Starting from the basic ideas about what is involved in managing an organization, this paper identifies what can motivate an organization to act in a socially responsible manner. SR – understood as an ethical responsibility, grounded in virtue ethics – leads to management excellence.

Keywords: Ethics; Firm; Management; Responsibility; Social Responsibility; Society

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The concept of responsibility: Norms, actions and their consequences

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Abstract. We clarify the concept of responsibility – its conditions, meanings, syntax, forms, and ethical status. Our analysis of responsibility proceeds on the secondary level of ethics, i.e. it is focused on conceptual structure and insofar independent of exactly what primary ethical position one adopts (e.g. Kantian, utilitarian, Rawlsian, ...). The concept of responsibility, in this understanding, is an ethically neutral concept: it does not by itself constitute any ethical claim. It is, however, an important vehicle for communicating and implementing given abstract norms into practical action. For, the concept of responsibility points to a wide range of practical questions of norm-oriented action, with particular attention to the actions' consequences, and provides a heuristic to address them. For example: What does it mean to be responsible for the consequences of one's actions? Who has to bear what kind of responsibility? What are the prerequisites and the limits of bearing responsibility? Thereby, the concept of responsibility establishes an architecture of argument to assess and guide actions.

Keywords: action, ascription, cause, collective, consequence, ethics, freedom, individual, knowledge, norm, obligation, person, power, reason, responsibility, society, system, virtue, will

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Preliminary definition:

Responsibility denotes the ability to give account to somebody for one's actions, and the possibility to be held accountable for them. It refers to the actions, and their consequences, that a person executes out of free will, knowing what she is doing. This implies that she could have acted otherwise, and that she may be asked to give reasons for her actions. Whereas responsibility in an elementary sense means that an action and its consequences can be ascribed to the perpetrator, in a normative sense responsibility means that the perpetrator of the action ought to take care that the action and its consequences are of a certain quality.

1. Introduction

Responsibility is a core concept in morals, philosophical ethics, law, organisations and politics. The concept links abstract and general norms to the concrete action context in a situation where the actor has discretionary scope for acting freely. Here, the concept of responsibility establishes an architecture of argument to assess and guide actions.

The modern philosophical concept of responsibility emerged in the eighteenth century during the enlightenment, in particular in political philosophy and philosophical ethics (e.g. Kant 1797).¹ With the perspective that humans are free to choose and act according to their will, it appears mandatory that they be able to give reasons for their choices and actions – reasons that are, in principle, appealing to other members of their community who share the same conventions and norms.

In the twentieth century, under the experience of humans' ability to unfold complex global and long-term impacts on Planet Earth and all humankind – present and future – the discussion of responsibility gained momentum. In particular, the concept of responsibility is more relevant now than in the past for the following reasons (e.g. Jonas 1984[1979], Spaemann 2007: 39):

1. Members of societies enjoy more individual and collective *freedom*: there are less external forces that constrain an acting person's choices, and due to better education persons' will to choose and act is more developed.
2. Due to technical, institutional, social, economic and political development, the *consequences of human actions* in the overall human-environment system of Planet Earth may be increasingly complex, long-term and long-range, thus potentially

¹ Aristotle is an ancient forerunner in that he had already a substantive discussion of some aspects of responsibility, in Book III of his *Nicomachean Ethics*, although he does not use an explicit term for responsibility (Petersen 2011: Sec. 1). He is concerned with the conditions under which one's actions may be subject to moral judgment, and identifies in particular free will as one such condition. Yet, his discussion stays focused on the action per se and does not include the action's consequences, and thereby falls short of addressing a crucial aspect of responsibility in the modern understanding of the concept.