







Customer Service Executive

(Meet and Greet)

[Job Role]

Qualification Pack: Ref. Id. THC/Q0205
Sector: Tourism and Hospitality

Textbook for Class XII

Customer Service Executive (Meet and Greet)

(Job Role)

Qualification Pack: Ref. Id. THC/Q4205
Sector: Tourism and Hospitality

Textbook for Class XII



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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

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Foreword

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF)–2005 recommends bringing out work and education into the domain of the curricular, infusing it in all areas of learning while giving it an identity of its own at relevant stages. It explains that work transforms knowledge into experience and generates important personal and social values, such as self-reliance, creativity and cooperation. Through work, one learns to find one's place in the society. It is an educational activity with an inherent potential for inclusion. Therefore, an experience of involvement in productive work in an educational set up will make one appreciate the worth of social life and what is valued and appreciated in the society. Work involves interaction with material or other people (mostly both), thus, creating a deeper comprehension and increased practical knowledge of natural substances and social relationships.

Through work and education, school knowledge can be easily linked to learners' life outside the school. This also makes a departure from the legacy of bookish learning and bridges the gap between the school, home, community and workplace. The NCF–2005 also emphasises Vocational Education and Training (VET) for all those children, who wish to acquire additional skills and/or seek livelihood through vocational education after either discontinuing or completing their school education. VET is expected to provide a 'preferred and dignified' choice rather than a terminal or 'last resort' option.

As a follow-up of this, the NCERT has attempted to infuse work across subject areas and also contributed towards the development of the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) for the country, which was notified on 27 December 2013. It is a quality assurance framework that organises all qualifications, according to the levels of knowledge, skills and attitude. These levels, graded from one to ten, are defined in terms of learning outcomes, which the learner must possess regardless of whether they are obtained through formal, non-formal or informal learning. The NSQF sets common principles and guidelines for a nationally recognised qualification system, covering schools, vocational education and training institutions, technical education institutions, colleges and universities.

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It is under this backdrop that Pandit Sunderlal Sharma Central Institute of Vocational Education (PSSCIVE), Bhopal, a constituent of the NCERT has developed learning outcome based modular curricula for vocational subjects from Classes IX to XII. This has been developed under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Vocationalisation of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education of the Ministry of Education, erstwhile Ministry of Human Resource Development.

This textbook has been developed as per the learning outcome based curriculum, keeping in view the National Occupation Standards (NOSs) for the job role and to promote experiential learning related to the vocation. This will enable the students to acquire necessary skills, knowledge and attitude.

I acknowledge the contributions of the book development team, reviewers, and all institutions and organisations for supporting towards the development of this textbook.

The NCERT welcomes suggestions from students, teachers and parents, which would help us to further improve the quality of the material in subsequent editions.

Dinesh Prasad Saklani
Director
National Council of Educational
Research and Training

New Delhi
September 2022

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About the Textbook

This textbook has been developed with expertise from the subject, the industry experts and academicians for making it a useful and inspiring teaching-learning resource material for vocational students. Adequate care has been taken to align the content of the textbook with the National Occupational Standards (NOSs) for the job role so that the students acquire necessary knowledge and skill as per the performance criteria mentioned in the respective NOSs of the Qualification Pack (QP). The textbook has been reviewed by experts so as to make sure that the content is not only aligned with NOSs, but also is of good quality. The NOSs for the job role of 'Customer Service Executive (Meet and Greet)' covered through this textbook are as follows:

1. THC/N9903 Etiquette and Hospitable Conduct
2. THC/N9904 Gender and Age Sensitive Service Practices
3. THC/N9906 Health and Hygiene
4. THC/N9907 Safety at Workplace
5. THC/N9909 Learn a Foreign or Local Language(s) Including English
6. THC/N9902 Customer-centric Services

Unit 1 of this textbook helps the students learn about various etiquettes, manners and hospitable conduct to be followed while dealing with guests.

Unit 2 emphasises the need for gender and age sensitivity in the Indian Tourism and Hospitality Industry.

Unit 3 will help students learn about regular cleaning procedures that need to be followed for upkeep of the workplace.

Unit 4 deals with standards at the workplace, hazard-free environment and avoiding disruption due to personal injuries and health issues.

Unit 5 will equip the students with knowledge, skills and experience to work in the tourism and hospitality industry, where French language is an asset.

Unit 6 will help the students learn about dealing with guests and assessment of quality of service. This unit also provides knowledge about fulfilling the customer's needs and requirements.

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I hope this textbook will be useful for students and teachers who will opt for this job role. I shall be grateful to receive suggestions and observations from readers, which would help in bringing out a revised and improved version of this textbook.

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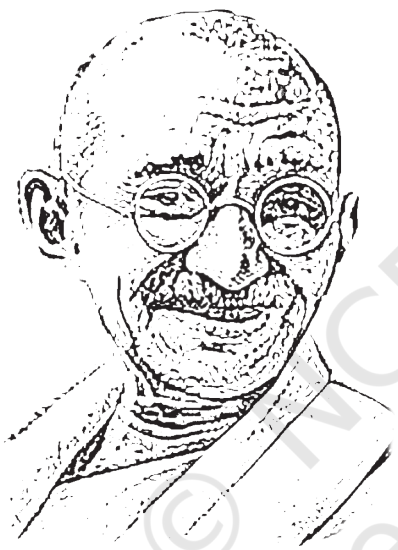
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.....Ahimsa is the very definition of woman and there is no place for untruth in her heart. If she is true to herself she is no longer Abala – the weak, but she is Sabala – the strong.....

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Unit 1

Etiquette and Hospitable Conduct

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The work of Customer Service Executive (Meet and Greet) involves receiving customers, addressing their queries, taking down their food orders, transferring these orders to the kitchen, instructing the kitchen staff, serving the customers and maintaining the eatery as per the organisational policy. This job role is available in hotels, travel organisations, hospitals, canteens, food kiosks, food courts and cafes, etc.

A Customer Service Executive should exhibit greeting etiquettes, manners and a hospitable conduct while dealing with the guest. On arrival at a hotel, a restaurant or an event, the guest will expect and wish to be treated with courtesy and respect.

In this context, etiquette does not mean knowing table laying or table manners alone. Instead, it also requires knowledge of the culture of the country or place where one is working. For example, workers in the Customer Service Industry need to know the proper way to greet their customers. If they are not formal enough for a given situation, they will make the guests feel uncomfortable. The guests should not feel that they are being treated disrespectfully or that the service is not up to proper standards. On the contrary, excessive formality (for a given situation) can also make guests uncomfortable. It can make them feel unwelcome.

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Session 1: Meaning, Components and Goal of Hospitality

Hospitality Industry

Hospitality refers to the behaviour or dealing between a guest and a host. It also refers to being hospitable, that is, the reception and entertainment of guests, visitors or strangers. Hospitality frequently refers to jobs in hotels, restaurants, casinos, catering, resorts, clubs and any other service organisations that deal with tourists.

Service industry is called the people's industry

'Hospitality' being a service industry, involvement with customers is an essential and routine feature. Hence, this service industry is also called people's industry. Some common features of this industry are:

- Guest is God.
- Understanding the customer's needs is the first step towards building a relationship with them.
- Polite and forthright behaviour builds trust.
- A satisfied customer brings in more business.
- Helping customers with a smile is all that it takes.



Fig.1.1: Components of hospitality

Components of hospitality

Since hospitality deals with making the guest comfortable, it includes a set of objectives and tasks to achieve the satisfaction level. These may be grouped under the components of hospitality.

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These include the following:

1. Front office
2. Food production
3. Housekeeping
4. Food and beverage service

Other allied aspects of the hospitality industry are:

1. Transportation and travel service
2. Retail services
3. Recreation and entertainment services

Services covered by the hospitality industry are enumerated in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Services covered under hospitality industry

Accommodation	Transportation and Travel Services	F&B Outlets	Retail Stores	Recreational Activities
• Hotel • Motel • Resort • Camping grounds • Condominiums • Time share • Casinos • Miscellaneous	• Ships • Airlines • Railways • Coaches • Limousines • Autos	• Restaurants • Kiosks • Vending machines • Cafeteria • Snack bars • Bars • Automats • Coffee shops	• Gift shops • Souvenir shops • Art and craft shops • Shopping malls • Markets • Super bazaars	• Recreation • Business • Entertainment • Shows • Fairs and meals • Festivals • Exhibition • Meetings • Sports • Study trips • Cultural events

Goal of hospitality

Hospitality refers to the relationship between a guest and a host, wherein the host welcomes the guest. It also includes the reception, recreation and entertainment of guests, visitors or strangers. Guest satisfaction is the goal of hospitality. Guests are from different age groups, gender, social status, occupation, culture, religion, language, etc. Hospitality industry targets the satisfaction of every guest considering all these variables.

Need of hospitality and hospitable conduct

Hospitality becomes a necessity for those who travel for various reasons like education, tourism, medical treatments, religion, business and trade. They also need means that entertain them and provide pleasure. These

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requirements are provided by the hospitality industry since they are available at the required time and place with the required arrangements.

The unique thing of this industry is that every employee would come in contact with the guest. So the need of following a code of conduct or a hospitable conduct arises. When you behave in a proper manner or follow a code of conduct or standard of professionalism, it makes the guest happy and satisfied, which fosters customer relation resulting in repeat business.

Hospitable conduct teaches us how to communicate, how to behave, how to present oneself and how to present food to the guests. The image of any hospitality organisation depends not upon any one individual but it is a team effort.

Guest as a customer

A person or organisation that uses economic services or commodities is known as a customer. The hospitality industry deals with customer satisfaction. However, in the process of delivering quality service, it also needs to pay the employees their salaries, earn profits and sustain in competition. Meanwhile, a guest has to pay for the services they take. Thus, a guest is a customer for the hospitality industry and hospitality services are its products, which this industry generates and distributes to the customer (in this case, the guest). Just as a customer buys products in a regular market situation, likewise in this case the guest pays for the services that they avail. Therefore, in order to generate business for the hospitality industry, customer satisfaction is of utmost importance.

Customer centricity

The hospitality industry focuses on ensuring a comfortable and hospitable stay for the guests. Thus, the industry aspires for customer satisfaction at every step. If any hospitality establishment tries to overlook this, it suffers a great loss.

Customers like to be recognised and addressed by their name and are very happy if the staff shows a friendly approach towards them. However, there is

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a thin line between being friendly and being familiar. Thus, the staff must not get overfriendly and start invading the guest's personal space.

The following points must be kept in mind:

- Never get too close to customers physically. Maintain an arm's distance at all times.
- Do not ask personal questions.
- Do not suggest or recommend regarding personal choices.
- Do not comment on family or personal issues.
- Do not discuss your personal matters with them.

Practical Exercises

Activity

Visit a hotel in your vicinity. Discuss with various departmental managers about hospitable conduct in their departments. Prepare a report on the same.

Material Required

Writing material

Procedure

- Visit a hotel nearby your area.
- Observe and discuss with the hotel departmental managers about the important points related to hospitable conduct with the guests.
- Take a note of these.
- Prepare a report and discuss in the class.

Check Your Progress

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. In India, hospitality is based on the principle _____ _____.
2. A _____ is a person or an organisation that uses economic services or commodities.
3. _____ is the basic goal of hospitality industry.

B. Answer in Brief

1. What is hospitality?
2. Explain the meaning of hospitable conduct.
3. What is customer centricity? Explain customer centricity in service.

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Session 2: Importance of Behavioural, Personal and Hospitality Etiquette

Manners and Etiquettes

The meaning of manners and etiquette overlaps each other. While in some cases, manners and etiquette can be exchanged, more often than not, these words are used in complete different contexts.

Manners can be considered as the stepping stone or a framework for establishing etiquette. Manners are ways in which an individual behaves and they are instilled from a tender age. Manners include things, such as, respecting elders, not speaking rudely, respecting (not trespassing) other people's property, not staring, not talking about someone behind someone's back, etc. Thus, manners are generally taking into consideration another person's feelings. Manners are almost the same in every culture and society.

Etiquette is a set of courteous rules for performing certain actions based on societal norms and values. Thus, etiquettes are a set of societal rules that are usually followed by a good-mannered member of a society.

The key difference between etiquette and manners is that the former changes depending on a society's culture and customs while the latter remains unchanged across communities.

Etiquettes set rules and regulations of how one should act in front of company, in a dining area, etc. For example, knowing which spoon to use for what during dinner is considered etiquette in certain cultures. In countries, such as the United States and the United Kingdom, etiquette includes things, such as, how to bow, how to address people of great importance, how to eat in company, how to dance, how to carry oneself, etc. It also includes how to address someone. Thus, calling a married lady 'Ms.' instead of 'Mrs.' or vice-versa is considered not knowing etiquettes. In certain places, such as, India, manners and etiquettes often coincide, such as not loitering aimlessly is considered as a good manner as well as etiquette.

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Etiquettes also change depending on the status and standing of the individual in the society. For example, a middle-class person will have a different set of etiquettes, compared to an upper class person. However, both of them can have the same set of manners.

Etiquettes and manners play an important part in civilisations. Also, it is often said that manners are far more important than etiquettes. Behaviour of a well-mannered person lacking etiquettes can often be forgiven, but not that of an ill-mannered person.

Etiquettes in Hospitality Industry

In the context of hospitality industry, the term 'etiquette' refers to showing respect to the guest. The Meet and Greet staff should be honest, trustworthy, courteous and kind to others.

Hotel staff serves as the first point of contact when a customer comes to the restaurant. The guests expect certain standards of etiquette to be followed. Thus, the staff must follow specific grooming standards and common courtesies for creating a positive dining experience.

Etiquette refers to the guidelines, which control the way a responsible individual should behave in the society.

Need for etiquettes

1. It reveals an individual to have a pleasant personality and helps create a good impression wherever one moves.
2. It provides you with the awareness of conduct, that is how to walk, talk and behave in the society.
3. It also helps lay down the ground rules for interacting with one's seniors, as well as subordinates and other fellow workers.
4. Etiquettes help create a relationship of trust and loyalty between both the staff and the guests.

Etiquettes for customer service executive

The following points must be followed by the staff:

1. Never run in a restaurant, lobby, foyer and the airport area.

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2. Always maintain a smile on your face.
3. Never point a finger to indicate direction.
4. Refrain from touching the guest's personal belongings without their consent and in their absence.
5. Avoid standing too close to the guest while serving or interacting with them.
6. Prioritise serving the elderly, ladies and children.
7. Don't fuss with your hair and neck or pick at your skin blemishes in the presence of guests.
8. Do not smoke in the guest area.
9. Never count tips in front of guests.
10. Do not touch food with bare hands. Always wear gloves or use a tissue paper.
11. Do not shout in the guest area.
12. Do not make unnecessary gestures with hands while talking to guests.
13. Stand erect in front of the guest.
14. Do not enter the guest area in casual clothes, that is, when not in uniform.

Types of Etiquette

Social etiquette

It is very important for individuals in the society to conduct themselves as per the agreed standards of conduct in the society. These agreed standards of conduct are known as social etiquettes. For example, greeting people, offering a seat to older people or people with children in public transport, not talking loudly on phone in front of others, not honking while driving, and listen carefully when others speak and such others.

Meeting etiquette

It is important to be formal during meetings. An example of meeting etiquette would be to always attend meeting with a pen and notepad. One must wait for one's turn to speak.

Telephone etiquette

Telephone etiquette refers to the way an individual speaks on the phone and communicates the message or receive the messages. It is essential for the

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Customer Service Executive to handle telephonic conversations well.

Eating etiquette

Food production and serving is the responsibility of Food and Beverage (F&B) department in a hotel. In smaller setups like restaurants, dhaba, etc. This work is done by cooks and waiters respectively. Table laying is an essential and important part of food serving in all types of dining setups. Mostly, the English or French style of table setting is followed in hotels.



Fig. 1.2: Table laying

Need for Good Manners

- Reduces friction and conflict between the staff and guests.
- A person who follows manners and etiquettes creates a good impression for self and the organisation.
- A well-mannered person is attractive. They can make friends very easily and create good relations with the guest.
- A well-mannered person appears approachable and trustworthy, thus making others comfortable.
- You can create a more peaceful world where there is more care, respect, admiration and compassion for others.

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Telephone Manners

Telephone is a tool of communication, any hospitality professional who is using telephone must be cautious because another person is interpreting you without seeing you and only through verbal interaction. Whenever you are conveying a message you should be polite and speak clearly so that he can understand the communication easily and clearly.

Answering the phone

Whenever answering the phone, always greet according to the time and clearly pronounce the name of the department where the phone is located. Always say "How can I assist you or How may I help you", These are the golden words of hospitality industry. A simple 'Hello' would be good for a non-hospitality organisation.

Taking messages

It is the duty of the person receiving the call to communicate the right message to the other person who is at the other end. If you are answering the phone on behalf of someone who is not around, always offer to take a message by saying: "I am sorry, Mr. John has gone out. May I take a message?" or "I am sorry, he is busy at the moment, may I note down your name and number and the concerned person will call you back?"

Sometimes the person calling may ask you for help and you may not know the answer to the question they have asked. In such a case, one must say politely, "I am sorry I do not know but I would be happy to pass on the message to the concerned person."

Always pass the message to the concerned person with the name, number and calling time so they can communicate with the caller and provide the required information.

Provide solution professionally

It may be possible that the person calling is too demanding and indulges in a long conversation. Under such circumstances, being polite is good but do not sacrifice your work and time. In such a case, you should

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politely draw the focus of conversation to the main issue and give your response. In case it is not possible for you to immediately offer solution or answer to the caller's query, collect his/her message, assure to call back as soon as you have a solution to the query and politely take leave of the caller.

Communication Skills

Good communication is an important skill for individuals in the hospitality industry. Since hospitality professionals deal with guests, they should be well versed in communication skills. Speech reveals a great deal about oneself to the one we speak with. Thus, one must speak clearly and sincerely. Always make yourself heard without shouting, interrupting or trying to stop others.

Do's

1. Look at the person but do not stare.
2. When meeting a guest for the first time, introduce yourself and ask their name.
3. Always use a person's name with respect when talking to them.
4. Seek clarity by asking questions politely when you do not understand something.
5. Try to focus on the subject.
6. Always praise those who deserve it
7. It is okay to disagree if done politely.
8. Always be attentive while talking to someone.

Don'ts

1. Whenever having conversation with somebody, do not look elsewhere or wander away.
2. Do not eavesdrop. This means that you should not listen in on conversations that you are not part of.
3. Do not interrupt when someone else is talking. If it is highly required, ask for permission by saying, "Excuse me, I may add something here?"
4. Do not whisper in front of another person.
5. Do not discuss personal issues with the guests and colleagues.

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6. Do not ask personal questions or pass remarks on someone's appearance or dressing sense.
7. Do not point or stare.
8. Do not argue with guests or with colleagues, especially when surrounded by guests.

'Magic words' to be polite

- "Thank You"
- "Please"
- "May I …"
- "Excuse Me"
- "I'm Sorry"

Body Language

Body language is the non-verbal communication of one's feelings, emotions, attitudes and thoughts through body movements, gestures, postures, facial expressions, walking style, positions and distance. This can be consciously more often subconsciously and accompanied or unaccompanied by spoken language. In other words, body language is how most people subconsciously transfer their thoughts and emotions to the body movements— the way in which they stand, walk or move their eyes and fold their arms. Following are the components of body language:

1. Make eye contact and have the right posture
   (a) Maintain eye contact with guests as they arrive at the premises.
   (b) Do not stare at the guests or look at them in a way that make them feel uncomfortable. Blink normally and look away at regular intervals.
   (c) If a guest narrates an experience or raises a concern, take genuine interest in addressing their concern. Show your willingness to help by nodding.
   (d) However, while nodding keep your facial expressions relaxed and normal so that the guest does not think that you are getting annoyed or impatient.
   (e) Avoid using mobile or tablets during conversation.

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2. Give a genuine smile
   (a) As a Customer Service Executive (CSE) is the first point of contact for the guest, always welcome them with a genuine smile. This shows positivity and trustworthiness. Also, do the same at the time of departure. This ensures the guest feels happy with the friendly service received while leaving.
3. Use positive gestures
   (a) Gesture is generally defined as visible body actions by which some meaning is conveyed. This includes manual gestures, movement of the whole body, facial expressions and the head movements.
   (b) Gestures are often used along with the verbal message. Gesture cluster refers to several attitudes expressed by not one gesture but a series of related gestures. Gesture clusters, which are a group of non-verbal communication, convey different attitudes.
4. Tone of voice
   (a) Voice is an extraordinary gift that identifies gender, geographical background (birthplace), education, emotional state and relationship with the person spoken to.
   (b) The tone of voice is an important mode of emotional expression.
5. Reading guest's emotions
   (a) A person might be able to control one's body postures and face expressions during anxiety and stress situations but a person's legs and feet would reveal the true emotional state.
   (b) In the case of hospitality industry, the service staff should be able to read a person's emotional state of mind by observing foot movements. This gives an edge in understanding customer expectations and helps serve them better.

Dealing with the Guest

While serving guests in the food and beverage area, the following precautions must be kept in mind:

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1. Try to address a guest's requests at all times. In case of difficulty, forward the request to your senior or supervisor.
2. If a guest appears to be angry or unhappy because of a mistake at your end, do not hesitate to apologise by saying "Sorry for the inconvenience caused to you Sir/Madam."
3. Do not indulge in jokes and personal inquiries, and avoid being arrogant or flirtatious with the guests.
4. Do not interrupt a guest in between any conversion for any reason (unless an urgent telephone call has come for the guest).
5. Never say "I don't know" when asked something without adding "allow me a moment to find out" or "let me see to it".
6. Never touch a guest or brush them, move them, wipe them, or dust them. For example, like when cleaning around the place, don't ask the guest to lift their legs or arms.
7. Do not work in a hurry so as to make the guest uncomfortable.
8. Do not have a personal conversation with the staff in front of the guest.
9. Do not eat in front of the guests.
10. Maintain both the guest's privacy as well as yours.
11. Avoid using a strong perfume as some people are highly allergic and scent sensitive.
12. Always treat all guests with equal respect.
13. Do not gossip about co-workers or guests.
14. Do not ask what someone is eating or drinking when they ask for more servings. Remember it or consult the order on the card you carry.

Practical Exercises

Activity

Visit any hotel or hospitality organisation, and observe the reception personnel dealing with the guests.

Material Required

Writing material, chart paper, etc.

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Procedure

- Visit any hotel or hospitality organisation.
- Observe the Front Office or reception staff while they are dealing with the guests.
- Note down your observation under the following parametres:
  - Dress code of the hotel personnel
  - Etiquette followed during communication
  - Use of magic words to create a good relationship with the guests

Check Your Progress

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. _____ refers to guidelines which control the way a responsible individual should behave in the society.
2. _____ is important for the individual who live in the society to conduct themselves as per the agreed standards of conduct in the society.
3. _____ is a tool to establish good relations with guests.
4. _____ are a person's outward bearing or way of behaving towards others.

B. Answer in Brief

1. What is etiquette? Explain the need for etiquette.
2. What are the various etiquettes followed by a Customer Service Executive?
3. Discuss the various precautions to be taken with the guests.
4. Explain the various components of body language.

SESSION 3: DELIVERING PROFESSIONAL SERVICE TO GUESTS

The Customer Service Executive's job goes beyond receiving guests. It involves a lot of recordkeeping and documentation as well. This is particularly true of food and beverage sector for various reasons, such as, feedback analysis, record of money transactions and for repeat business.

Office manners or proper office conduct is needed to do office jobs. Office manners are closely associated with work behaviour. A person working in an office should follow office manners and behave like a highly

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skilled professional. The responsibilities may include paper work, wearing a uniform and following the set standards of organisational behaviour. Some find it difficult to adhere to these formalities but in the long run, well-documented and recorded work procedures serve as useful guides for future use.

According to Janice Morphet (2015), the work done in an organisation should be recorded and documented for guidance and further use. Even in planning our short term and long term works, there is a single use plan meant for one time usage, and policy and procedure meant for guidance in long term planning and for further use. Plans are needed because of the following reasons:

1. It brings the work on record, curbs malpractices and makes a person accountable.
2. It makes work smooth and result oriented.
3. It makes work predictable and quick to accomplish.
4. It curbs expenses and wastage of material and manpower.
5. Work performance becomes measurable and accountable.
6. Last but not least, it helps in future decision making and forecasting.

Formalities for Hospitality Staff

Formalities for housekeeping staff may be classified as:

1. Formal behaviour
2. Formal dressing (uniform)
3. Formal communication

Formal behaviour



Fig. 1.3: A hospitality staff wearing a formal suit

Behaviour is influenced by speech, manners, dress, etc. Meet and Greet personnel should avoid the use of informal words or casual language. They should practise short sentences, proper etiquettes, follow dress code, etc. When dealing with a guest, formal behaviour means being polite, mature and sensitive to the feelings of the other. Formal behaviour is always required, more so during social events.

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Formal uniform

A Customer Service Executive (Meet and Greet) is expected to be dressed formally or in the prescribed uniform always. Since meeting and greeting is a job that has formality and formal conduct embedded in it, a formal uniform helps in establishing a dignified formal relation with the guest.

Formal communication

It refers to exchange of information officially. Communication needs recordkeeping. So any action taken on a communication should be conveyed to the concerned person through proper channel so that everyone has the knowledge of the steps taken by the department.

Use of Proper Language in Customer Dealing

The Customer Service Executive (Meet and Greet) has to deal with guests who speak different languages, have varying accents and pronunciation. The Meet and Greet Personnel should be able to use proper language while talking to guests. They should be able to speak and understand clearly what the guest wants.

They should be able to construct clear and concise sentences. This can be learned by thinking, organising, drafting and writing small sentences with the available vocabulary and word knowledge.

You can learn to speak good English. Some people even manage to have a speaking style of their own. Clear speaking is an art, so one should hone this art.

Communication

A Meet and Greet Executive is required to converse and communicate with several people and officials in discharging one's duties. They may be:

- Superior
- Subordinate
- Friends
- Guests
- Relatives
- Groups and in discussions

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In the hospitality industry, the person dealing with the customer and colleagues should be able to change the tone of one's voice to fun, harsh, gentle, easy, attractive, etc., as per the situation.

Upward communication

This means communication flowing from the lower levels to the upper levels of hierarchy. In this kind of communication it should be kept in mind that the receiver has or may have more knowledge to resolve the issue. Upward communication may be an idea, suggestion, complaint, grievance, rumour, etc., and it can be passed on face-to-face, in a meeting or conference, etc.

Upward communication becomes more effective if you have good vocabulary, knowledge of sentence formation and language grammar.

Hospitality staff should use the given words while performing their duties:

- Can
- Could
- Shall
- Should
- May
- Will
- Would

Hospitality staff should not forget to say:

- Please
- Thank you…
- You're welcome
- I'm very sorry…
- Excuse me…
- Of course/Certainly…
- Don't worry
- It is also recommended to add Sir or Madam after the words above. E.g.; 'Thank you, Sir'/'Excuse me, Madam'

Greeting customers

While greeting customers at the Airport, Railway station or Hotel portico, Customer Service Staff should always use the following:

- Good Morning/Afternoon/Evening/Sir/Madam
- Welcome to our city/hotel
- Can I help you? How may I help you?

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While taking clients to the Front Desk say:

- Come with me.
- This way, please.
- Here you are.
- Will this table be alright?

Importance of politeness

Customer service staff should treat every customer as guests, and not merely as clients. Politeness is the art of presenting your thoughts in the best possible way. For customer service department, politeness is very important. Politeness enables you to keep good relations with your customers by showing the guest that you value and respect them. If at all necessary, express your disagreement in a soft voice and tone so as not to be too direct or forceful.

There are many ways in which we can show that we value and respect the customer. In more formal situations, we should be especially careful to use certain polite phrases. Followings are the dialogues which need to be kept in mind for politeness in your language:

- Hi, I'm XXX; Welcome to ….
- What can I do for you?
- May I help you?
- May I take your coat?
- Have you booked a table?
- How many are you?
- Follow me, please.
- Would you like to have salad with it?
- It will take just a few minutes.

Customer grievances and complaints

A grievance is resentment over something believed to be wrong or unfair. In the hospitality industry, grievances and complaints are used positively to improve their products and service quality, customer satisfaction and customer attention. The reasons for guest grievances could be:

1. Absence of friendliness in staff
2. Unnecessary excuses by staff
3. Absence of good conduct and courtesy
4. Unhelpful attitude of servers

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5. Reaching late to receive the guest— at the airport or railway station or the hotel portico.
6. Non-responsive attitude of management for complaints, etc.



Fig. 1.4: A Meet and Greet Personnel assisting customers

Customer assistance

Meet and Greet personnel should provide assistance to the guest while receiving and greeting the guests. They should be trained to anticipate a guest's requirement.

- Consider offering greetings in multiple languages to accommodate international visitors.
- Ensure that the assistance point is clean, organised, and visually appealing.
- The meet and greet personnel should be knowledgeable about the local area, attractions, and services offered by the establishment.
- Tailor your assistance to the specific needs and preferences of each customer. Ask open-ended questions to understand their interests and objectives, and provide personalised recommendations or suggestions accordingly.
- Offer customers information about local attractions, events, transportation options, and dining recommendations. Provide maps, brochures, or other promotional materials to help customers navigate the area more easily.
- Be prepared to assist customers with special requests or accommodations, such as, booking tickets for attractions, arranging transportation, or making restaurant reservations.

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- Thank customers for choosing your establishment and for allowing you to assist them. Express your appreciation for their patronage and assure them that you're available to help with any further assistance they may need.

Positive attitude

To work in the hospitality industry especially, a person should have positive attitude towards work. Positive attitude towards work environment and organisation along with job satisfaction are influenced by the characteristics of the job, individual perception, psychological contact, relations with co-workers and stress experienced during the job performance. To achieve positive attitude towards work, you should be well-versed about work and the activities required to be performed to complete the job.

Special attention to guest

Always give special attention to the following guests:



Fig. 1.5: Special attention to guests

1. Aged or elderly guests
2. Infants and young children
3. Specially-abled guest
4. International guests
5. Guest with health issues

Points to remember

Following points must be kept in mind while giving special attention to the guests:

1. Escort the guests to the hotel and help them to get registered and/or be seated.

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2. Offer them a relaxing and comfortable seating environment.
3. Attend to the elder guests first and do it with care and respect. Enquire if they need any special assistance.
4. Anticipate the guest's needs keeping their physical challenges in mind.
5. Use a warm and friendly tone with young and infant guests.
6. Provide a wheelchair for the disabled guests.
7. Offer an escort to the visually impaired guests and provide them with appropriate attention.
8. Use sign language with guests who have partial or complete hearing issues.
9. Use a common language to communicate with NRI guest or use a translator.
10. A guest with health issues should be served food according to need.

Practical Exercises

Activity

Visit a hotel in your area and observe how the hotel staff use proper language and politeness in customer handling.

Material Required

Writing material, chart paper, etc.

Procedure

- Visit a star rated hotel nearby your area.
- Observe the conduct of staff while dealing with guests.
- Note the observation in your notebook under the following criteria:
  (a) Language (b) Customer service (c) Receiving guests (d) Seating the guest (e) Offering services (f) Handling queries (g) Handling complaints
- Present it in the class and discuss with the classmates.

Check Your Progress

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. _____ are needed to do the office jobs properly.
2. Customer service department is to adopt _____ behaviour.

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3. _____ refers to interchange of information officially.
4. _____ is the art of presenting your thoughts in the best possible way.

B. Answer in Brief

1. Discuss the formalities required to be followed by the hospitality staff.
2. What is communication? Explain the types of communication.
3. Write the importance of politeness.
4. What are the reasons for guest complaints?
5. Explain the various points to be followed while receiving and greeting the guest at a railway station or airport.

Session 4: Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty

Measuring Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is the prime factor in hospitality industry. It can be attained on the basis of various services offered through F&B and accommodation arrangements. However, the entire hospitality industry is oriented towards customer services offered by different departments and personnel therein. A customer service executive is mostly the first representative of hospitality industry who comes in contact with a guest, and in most cases also the last person to see the guest off. The services of a Customer Service Executive are, therefore, important in establishing customer relationship.

The main work of Customer Service department is to provide products and services and be involved in customer interaction and try to made the guest feel satisfied. The hospitality that gives repeat business and customer retention is customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction is a complex process. Satisfaction in the service industry can be enhanced on the basis of guest review. It is the duty of the Customer Service Executive to collect both positive and negative feedback from the guest and offer assistance with regard to hotel bookings.

Notes

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Customers' experiences play a pivotal role in determining their satisfaction within the service industry. Every interaction a customer has with a service provider shapes their perception of the brand and influences their overall satisfaction. Positive experiences, characterised by attentive and personalised service, prompt resolution of issues, and seamless interactions, tend to lead to higher levels of satisfaction. Conversely, negative experiences, such as long wait times, unhelpful staff, or subpar service quality, can result in dissatisfaction and may even drive customers away. Therefore, service providers must prioritise delivering exceptional experiences at every touchpoint to ensure customer satisfaction and foster loyalty. By consistently exceeding customer expectations and providing memorable experiences, businesses can differentiate themselves in the competitive service industry landscape and cultivate lasting relationships with their clientele.

Factors that build customer satisfaction

There are four important factors that build customer satisfaction:

1. Price
2. Quick service
3. Atmosphere or ambience
4. Attitude and behaviour of the Customer Service Executive

Guests are mostly dissatisfied due to the following reasons:

1. Insufficient parking availability near hospitality outlets.
2. Insufficient meet and greet services put a guest off since it is the first introduction to the hotel or organisation and a guest expects to be welcomed on arrival.
3. Unavailability of food variety is a major factor in terms of customer satisfaction. A variety of food products attracts more customers and meets the expectations of many customers.
4. Poor quality food is another important factor. Poor food quality results in bad customer feedback and losing of customer base. Food quality matters a

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lot when it comes to processed food. So, it should be freshly prepared.

5. If the staff is not loyal, the credibility of the organisation suffers.
6. Delayed delivery of food order or delayed arrival of the Meet and Greet personnel to greet and escort the guest is something that annoys a guest.
7. Poor quality of services of any kind in the organisation would lead to customer dissatisfaction and loss of repeat business.
8. Poor etiquettes and manners of the staff would most certainly drive guests off since hospitality is essentially an industry wholly dependent on courtesy and politeness.
9. Inability to anticipate the guest's needs would result in delays and dissatisfaction of the guest, hence must be avoided as far as possible. An important ability customer service executive is to anticipate the guest needs and arrange to fulfill them.
10. Inability to handle the guest's queries and complaints properly results in dissatisfaction guest and as such, brings in negative feedback and also affects word of mouth publicity.

Contribution to the Brand Value

Brand is the name, sign, symbol or some other feature that distinguishes one seller's product from another. It carries and conveys the image of a company, product, service, or a person.

In today's world of competition when there remains very little distinction between two products of the same kind produced by different companies, it becomes very important to communicate the better quality of the proposed product to the customer. Brand is the tool that gets embossed on the customers' mind. Whenever the customer comes across a certain brand name, they relate it to certain product, company or service for which the brand is being used. Thus, even in the hospitality industry, the brand value is extremely important. This value is built based on the staff's behaviour and their obedience to the standard operating procedures.

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This adds to the guest's overall experience and influences their satisfaction level.

Practical Exercises

Activity

Visit a hotel to learn about receiving different customers and how feedback is collected from the customer and their satisfaction evaluated.

Material Required

Writing material, chart paper, etc.

Procedure

- Visit a rated hotel nearby your area .
- Observe the way of receiving the customers.
- Take feedback from the customers.
- Note your observations in your notebook.
- On the basis of your observation, evaluate and prepare a report on customer satisfaction.
- Present it in the class and discuss with the classmates.

Check Your Progress

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. _____ is the accumulated experience of a customer's purchase and consumption experience.
2. _____ is the name, term, sign, symbol or any other feature that distinguishes one seller's product from another.
3. Satisfaction in the service industry can be enhanced on based _____.
4. Customer satisfaction results in _____ business.

B. Answers in Brief

1. What is the importance of customer satisfaction?
2. Write the reasons for guest dissatisfaction.
3. What is a brand value? Explain its importance.
4. What is the importance of delivering service as promised to the customer?

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Unit 2

Gender and Age-Sensitive Service Practices


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People often mistakenly use the terms 'sex' and 'gender' interchangeably. However, in fact, there terms are different. Sex refers to a set of biological attributes in humans and animals. It is primarily associated with physical and physiological features including chromosomes, gene expression, hormone levels and function, and reproductive or sexual anatomy. A person's sex is typically assigned at birth based on one's physiological characteristics. Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men, such as norms, roles, behaviour that are attributed to them by society based on perceived or self-identified gender identities. It varies from society to society and can be changed. To put it in a nutshell, sex refers to biological differences while gender refers to socio-cultural differences.

The roles assigned to women in the family, political or other social groups reflect their status in the society. The roles or jobs given to women in corporates also reflect the same. However, Indian industry is gradually opening up to the idea of giving better and higher positions of power to women now as compared to the past. Though

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the Indian hospitality industry is showing better and more participation of women, but the participation of women in the workforce is still far lesser than their share in the total population. This is inspite of a number of measures being taken by the government through legislation and policy.

Low participation of women is also prevalent in the job role of Customer Service Executive (Meet and Greet), with very few positions occupied by them, and almost all key managerial positions dominated by men. The main barrier to gender equality is the deeply entrenched discriminatory beliefs and a stereotypical attitude towards women in the workplace.

Though India is fast developing to become a superpower, yet the unequal status of its women at the workplace is still prevalent.

In this unit, you will study about gender and age sensitivity in the Indian tourism and hospitality industry. This knowledge and information is equally important for employers hiring female staff as well as for the females employed as Customer Service Executive in the hospitality industry.

Session 1: Women's Rights and Respect at Workplace

The Constitution of India guarantees all its citizens equal rights, and it goes a step further and makes a special provision for safeguarding the interest of women in all gender-sensitive matters. The Indian law grants equal rights to women in all social, economic and political aspects of life and work. While there have been several studies, research and voices on gender inequalities in many areas, it has been sadly overlooked in organisational leadership. This is despite the fact that women have demonstrated remarkable success in several jobs, which were once considered the 'male domain' of the working world.

Right and Respect

Over the years, several enactments have been passed for the welfare of the workforce. Some of these enactments lay down special provisions for the female workforce. In

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recent times, we have seen an increase in the number of women workers in organisations, both public and private.

Not only are women increasing their overall representation at the workplace, they are also increasingly occupying higher positions of authority in the business hierarchy and holding coveted jobs at all levels of the corporate structure. In fact, more and more women are becoming the primary breadwinners for their families, changing the traditional concept of family caregivers.

While the scenario is changing dramatically for women in business so far as getting their place in the workforce is concerned, they are still facing disadvantages as compared to men.

Women's rights at the workplace include many facets of their life, such as the right to work during pregnancy. Women cannot be excluded or removed from a job by an employer due to pregnancy as long as she can perform satisfactorily. Employers cannot discriminate in hiring any person due to their marital status, gender or age. An employee in any organisation cannot sexually harass a woman employee. This includes a hostile work environment where the woman faces sexual comments, bad touch or unwanted sexual advances accompanied by the fear of losing her job if she does not comply with the sexually hostile environment. It is recommended that women employees should report all advances of this sort to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or their supervisor.

Because of rights to equality at the workplace, women have the freedom to work in almost any organisation or position they choose. Women have the freedom to work in almost any organisation or position they choose. Thus, women can join the armed forces, work as cab, auto or train drivers, become executives in large corporations and can own businesses. As the economic status of women improves, so does the welfare of their families, children and the nation.

Laws for the Protection of Working Women

Various laws exist which provide benefits and security to all the employees, specifically female employees. The main objective for passing these laws is to enable

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women to increase their efficiency, and encourage more women to come out of the confines of their home, look at a brighter future for themselves, and also aid in the growth of this country. Governments over time have taken special care to enact and amend laws to ensure greater participation of women in the growth of India.

Some of the laws that protect women at the workplace are described below:

1. The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 (Maternity Benefit Act):

The Maternity Benefit Act was enacted to bring a uniform code for providing maternity benefits to women workers across industries. It is an act to regulate the employment of women in every factory, plant or mine irrespective of the number of employees, and to all the shops and establishments employing or having employed 10 persons or more.

2. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 (Equal Remuneration Act):

This Act provides for payment of equal wages for work of same and similar nature to male and female workers and for not making discrimination against female employees in the matters of transfer, training and promotion, etc. The Equal Remuneration Act in India was enacted to prevent discrimination between workers on grounds of gender.

3. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (SHA):

Sexual harassment at workplace is rather common and several cases related to it are reported. In 2013, India enacted a law on prevention of sexual harassment of female employees at the workplace. The statute was enacted almost 16 years after the landmark judgment of the Supreme Court of India, in the matter of Vishaka and others vs State of Rajasthan (Vishaka Judgment). The Vishaka Judgment laid down guidelines making it mandatory for every employer to provide a mechanism in their organisation to redress

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grievances pertaining to sexual harassment at workplace and enforce the right to gender equality of working women (Guidelines). The enactment of the SHA has brought the much needed relief to the women workforce.

4. Shops and Establishments Act (SEA):

This act regulates the working conditions of employees in a shop or commercial establishment. The SEA provides for various provisions pertaining to— (a) notice period for termination, (b) leave entitlement, and (c) working conditions like weekly working hours, weekly off, overtime, etc.

Conversely, due to the nature of work of certain industries, the female employees may have to work beyond the set limits, for which the industries need to take prior permission from the authorities. The approval for allowing women to work late nights always comes with special conditions and obligations on the part of the employer, such as providing a safe working environment, providing adequate security during the night hours, provide transport to their residence after the late working hours, placing women employees in a group while working at nights and not alone, etc.

The IT sector has seen an exponential growth in the recent past and this sector is one which typically has a huge manpower. We see equal number of men and women working in the IT sector, and they work late into the nights for their shift work, due to catering to countries across the globe, with varied time difference. In addition to the provisions under the SEA, the State Governments have their independent IT/ITES policies, which also address the issues of women working night shifts and the various measures expected to be undertaken by the employer to ensure their safety.

Other enactments

Apart from the laws and acts discussed here, there are several other laws for the welfare and for safeguarding employee in general. Every employee must be aware

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of these enactments as it provides them with social security. These are—The Employee's Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952; The Employee's State Insurance Act, 1948; Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972; Payment of Bonus Act, 1965; etc.

Company's Policies to Prevent Sexual Harassment

A company has the responsibility to provide a workplace that is safe and free from sexual harassment. It is not only its legal obligation, but it also reflects having sound organisational sense. Occurrence or prevalence of sexual harassment at workplace could lead to poor morale of the employees, low productivity, complaints and grievances that, if left unaddressed, may even lead to lawsuits. The same laws that prohibit gender discrimination prohibit sexual harassment.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment can be described as any unwelcoming sexual conduct that creates a frightening, hostile or offensive working milieu. Any kind of verbal or physical action done by a male that makes a woman uncomfortable and embarrassed amounts to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome and inappropriate comments or jokes, inappropriate questions or comments about personal life, sexually offensive emails or messages (whether explicit or implicit). A few examples are:

1. Demand or request for sexual favours
2. Physical contact and advances
3. Sexually coloured remarks
4. Showing pornography, or any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.

Strategies for prevention

Prevention of sexual harassment is the most effective weapon against it. Harassment does not cease to exist on its own. It is generally observed that if the problem is not prevented or immediately addressed, the harassment aggravates and becomes more difficult

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to counter or remove. Preventing sexual harassment is the responsibility of the employer. Employers must, therefore, strictly follow the provisions of law and take steps to prevent sexual harassment at their workplace and deal with it promptly and effectively if it occurs. The involvement of all those concerned and a clear, honest intent is a pre-requisite to the success of preventive strategies and plans on sexual harassment. This should better be in the form of a written policy. Several effective steps that can be taken to reduce the risk of sexual harassment occurring at workplace are:

Abiding the Vishaka Guidelines

These are a set of procedural guidelines for use in India to address the cases of sexual harassment. They were promulgated by the Indian Supreme Court in 1997 and were superseded in 2013 by The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. The Vishaka Judgment laid down guidelines making it mandatory for every employer to provide a mechanism to redress grievances pertaining to workplace sexual harassment and enforces the right to gender equality of working women ('Guidelines'). Organisations were expected to follow these Guidelines till the enactment of the SHA, after which the SHA has become applicable. The enactment of the SHA has brought the much needed relief to the women workforce.

Adopt a clear policy against sexual harassment

Every organisation must include a policy in the employee handbook addressing any instance of sexual harassment. The policy should contain the following:

1. Definition or meaning of sexual harassment;
2. Clear statement of zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment;
3. Statement that any wrongdoers in this regard will be dealt with strictly, disciplined and/or even fired by the company.
4. Lay down a clear procedure for filing sexual harassment complaints.
5. Clear resolve of the company that any complaint received will be investigated fully and retaliation against any complainant of sexual harassment will not be tolerated.

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In any case, just having an anti-harassment policy does not mean that there will be no harassment complaints. Clear policy and effective procedures, coupled with anti-harassment sensitisation and training for all staff will assist in preventing harassment and support individuals who are being harassed to come forward and ensure that the problem is addressed quickly and effectively.

Train employees

Training or sensitisation sessions should be conducted at least once every year for all employees of the organisation so that the staff is educated and informed about harassment on a regular basis. It should be made entire clear that this is a workplace with zero tolerance for harassment. These sessions reiterate that all employees have a right to a workplace free from sexual harassment. The policies and procedures of preventing and addressing harassment complaints should be reviewed time to time and employees should be encouraged to use it.

Train supervisors and managers

Yearly training sessions dedicated only to supervisors and managers should be conducted. The sessions should be dedicated to educate the managers and supervisors about sexual harassment and how to deal with such complaints. The organisation's anti-harassment policy should be developed together with employees, managers and union representatives. Share and communicate the policy with all employees and make sure that all managers and supervisors realise their responsibility to enable a harassment-free work environment.

Apart from dealing with complaints, an employer has additional obligations such as:

1. Providing a safe working environment;
2. Organising workshops and awareness or sensitisation programmes at regular intervals for sensitising employees on the issues and implications of workplace sexual harassment;
3. Organising regular orientation programmes for the internal complaints committee members;
4. Treat sexual harassment as misconduct under the service rules and initiate action for misconduct.

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5. Ensure that the policy applies to everyone, including managers and supervisors.
6. Investigate and deal with all complaints of harassment promptly and fairly.
7. Do not hesitate to discipline employees who harass other employees.
8. Provide protection and support for the employees who feel they are being harassed.
9. Take action against discriminatory jokes, posters, graffiti, e-mails and photos at the work place.
10. Monitor and review the policy and procedures on a regular basis to ensure that it remains effective for your workplace.

Employers must devise a mechanism for addressing sexual harassment in a confidential and sensitive manner after a grievance has been filed. A well-implemented strict policy in an organisation may inhibit inappropriate conduct in the initial stage itself before it becomes a big problem for any employee or the company.

Facilities available at work

The following facilities are very important for women safety at work and must be provided by the employer in every sector, including the hospitality sector.

Transport facilities

Transport facilities are offered by companies to foster security measures for female employees. As employee security is of paramount importance, the following measures are generally put in place to oversee the security of all female employees who are required to report to work before 6:30 am and after 7:30 p.m. Following are the guidelines:

1. Transport arrangement must be provided to every female employee working in 24 × 7 operations or on the approval of respective department head.
2. The roster should preferably be devised so as to ensure that the last drop is not of a female employee.
3. A security guard of the company must escort the vehicle in which any female employee is travelling. This condition must always be adhered to.
4. All guards escorting company employees must be provided a mobile phone and emergency contact numbers.

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5. Every company must establish an emergency contact number, which shall be monitored by the administrative department.
6. All cabs provided by the company shall prominently display emergency helpline number.
7. Administration department shall conduct regular briefings for drivers on the code of conduct while on duty.
8. Install GPS tracking devices securely in each vehicle to track the real-time location and movement.

Reporting abuse

It is the duty of the employer to create a positive workplace atmosphere so that women do not hesitate to come to work and feel assured that they will be treated with dignity, respect and will be safeguarded against harassment. All women employees in an organisation must be informed during the orientation programme or otherwise, of their rights, facilities and actions that they can initiate regarding sexual harassment.

All organisations must have an agreement of code of conduct signed annually by employees and vendors with clearly defined expected behavioural norms especially with female employees.

A sexual harassment committee headed by a senior woman must be set up which would report to the Managing Director or a senior member of the management. At least two women should be on the committee, one from the staff and one from management. Every complaint, either verbal or written, should be documented and investigated promptly by the committee. Strict and prompt disciplinary action must be taken against those found violating the code of conduct to ensure that it is not repeated. The investigation and action taken should be irrespective of the person being a senior, supervisor, colleague, staff, customer or vendor.

Maternity leave

Central and state government organisations, have their own rules with regard to maternity benefits to their women employees and so do the various PSUs or Public

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limited companies, public or private sector banks and large private sector companies.

Every type of organisation lays down the eligibility conditions for availing maternity leave. Rules are also laid down for the number of days of maternity leave admissible or extension thereof, its clubbing with other types of leaves, etc. Thus, casual leave (CL) cannot be clubbed with maternity leave.

Some organisations even provide the facility to cover expenses of delivery in a hospital. Some companies provide health insurance benefits and other allowances to their women employees. The maternity policy can vary from one organisation to another. Hence, one should enquire from its HR department about the maternity benefits provided as per the HR policy of that company.

Besides, some companies give facilities to their women employees to work from home or allow them to have the facility of flexible working hours. Some companies, especially in the IT sector arrange for day care facility in the office premises for children of their employees.

Working hours

Indian law does not allow working of female employees beyond the prescribed hours in factories and commercial establishments. In fact, Section 66 of the Factories Act, 1948, imposes restrictions on the employment of women to work between 7:00 pm to 6:00 am. However, the Chief Inspector is empowered to grant relaxation, but in that case, women are not permitted to work between 10:00 pm to 5:00 am. The employer should understand that working beyond permissible hours can only be done on rare occasions and not as a norm. Any deviation from this requires prior permission of the concerned or government authorities. Such permissions are conditional and impose restrictions and duties on the employer aimed at ensuring security of the female employees. Arranging for safe transportation facilities for female employees who are working beyond permissible hours is mandatory. Non-adherence of such conditions attracts penalties.

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Gender and Age-sensitive practices in the tourism and hospitality industry

Gender and age-sensitive practices in the hospitality and tourism industry are crucial for promoting inclusivity, diversity, and ensuring positive experiences for both employees and guests. Some of the key practices are:

- Implement policies that promote gender and age equality in recruitment, hiring, and promotion processes in hotels, travel agencies, airlines, food and beverage outlets and other entertainment areas. This includes ensuring fair wages, benefits, and opportunities for advancement regardless of gender or age.
- Encourage diversity in the tourism and hospitality workplace by actively recruiting individuals from different genders, age groups, backgrounds, and cultures.
- Provide ongoing training and development programmes that address gender and age-related issues, such as unconscious bias training, diversity awareness workshops, and mentoring programmes aimed at supporting career growth for employees of all ages and genders in the tourism and hospitality sector.
- Ensure a safe and respectful work environment free from discrimination, harassment, and ageism. Implement clear policies and procedures for addressing and reporting any incidents of misconduct or discrimination.
- Train staff to provide inclusive and respectful service to guests of all genders and ages. This includes understanding and respecting cultural differences, addressing diverse needs and preferences, and avoiding stereotypes or assumptions.
- Ensure that facilities, services, and activities are accessible to individuals of all ages and genders, including those with disabilities or special needs. This may involve providing accessible accommodations, amenities, and transportation options.

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Safety Measures for Female Employees

Following sections discuss the basic safety measures, which are essential for women's safety at workplace.

CCTV cameras

Though the workplace may be a secure area, common places such as washrooms, smoking areas and cafés may pose threat. One simple measure that is commonly adopted is Closed Circuit Television (CCTV). CCTV surveillance in common places is essential. CCTV in the space leading to the restroom is also essentially required. The restrooms, locker rooms and the corridor leading to them must have proper lights and all doors must be well-fitted and have secure latches. Preferably, a female security guard/staff should be posted near the toilet.



Fig. 2.1: CCTV cameras for women safety at workplace

Lockers

Safe deposit lockers and cabinets should be provided to every staff in the ladies restroom to keep their personal belongings safely. The restrooms should also have other basic facilities such as dressing tables, couch to rest during breaks, changing room, alarms and fire extinguisher for use in case of any emergency.

Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee

It is the onus of every employer or organisation to provide a workplace that is free of sexual harassment. Not only is this its legal obligation, but it also works in the interest of the organisation and the business it runs.

In every organisation an anti-harassment committee should be constituted, which deals with prevention of sexual harassment of female employees and complaints received, if any. The functions of this committee have been detailed out in the previous pages.

Women's Helpline

As an effective safety measure for female employees, apart from sexual harassment policies, women helpline numbers may also be displayed in common public areas such as washrooms, cafeterias, etc., so that these can be referred to in case of emergency as and when required.

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A national women's helpline is a service provided specifically to serve predominantly, women victims of violence or harassment.

The National Commission for Women Act, 1990 established the National Commission for Women as a statutory authority in January 1992. The commission took a number of actions, including reviewing the legal and constitutional protections for women, recommending corrective legislation, assisting in the resolution of disputes, and advising the government on all policy issues pertaining to women.

As an effective safety measure for female employees, apart from sexual harassment policies, women helpline numbers-1091 may also be displayed in common public areas such as washrooms, cafeterias, etc., so that these can be referred to in case of emergency as and when required. A national women's help line is a service provided specifically to serve predominantly, women victims of violence or harassment.

Safety and Security for Female Traveller

As per industry experts, 10–18 per cent of their guests comprise of single women travellers. In India, hotels have begun understanding that the number of single women travellers is a fast growing, niche market and has a tremendous potential in India. Hotels that often perceive their customers as only men, could be losing a lot of clientele if their practices or facilities are not tailored to suit the female customers. With the change in trends, where more and more women are now travelling for official work trips outside the comfort zone of their home and cities, safety and security is of utmost priority. Hotels have now started becoming more considerate towards this aspect and are adopting various methods to ensure good service for the guests. Hence, specially designed single lady programmes help the hotels to assure their lady guests a safe and sound environment.

The basic guidelines adopted at various hotels for providing a safe and secure environment for a female traveller are:

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- Never allocate a lone female any room on the first floor or a corner room on any floor. Because gaining access to rooms on first floor and escaping after committing a crime is very easy as compared to higher floors. Thus, as a policy followed by all hotels and accommodation setups, as far as possible, a room located in the middle of the floor is allotted to a single female. Provide escort service to and from hotel car parking to the room, especially at night.
- As far as possible, the car parking should be on-site, provided with bright lights and, if possible equipped with CCTV.
- Never read out a single female's room number when checking in or give it to anyone, to avoid any other visitor getting to know of it. Instead, point out the room number to her on the registration card.
- Educate single females about the various features available in the hotel for their added security like peep holes on doors.
- Bedside lighting controls must be available and functional in all rooms having female occupants.
- Same gender room service attendant may be provided on request.
- The staff should be apprised of the health and safety guidelines for a single female guests.
- A single female guest should not be seated in the dining room facing the entrance.

Practical Exercises

Activity

Visit a hotel and find out the policies and procedures the hotel follows to prevent sexual harassment of its female employees.

Material Required

Writing material, notepad, etc.

Procedure

- Visit a hotel or hospitality organisation near your area.
- Discuss with the owner or management about the measures taken to prevent sexual harassment of female employees.
- On the basis of your study prepare a short report.
- Present and discuss it in the class.

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Check Your Progress

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. The _____ was enacted to provide maternity benefit to women working in industries and other workplaces.
2. Any unwelcome sexual conduct that creates a frightening, hostile, or offensive working atmosphere for women is termed as _____.
3. SEA stands for _____ Act.
4. The Vishaka Guidelines were promulgated by the Indian Supreme Court in the year _____.

B. Answer in Brief

1. Explain in brief some policies to prevent sexual harassment at workplace.
2. Write a note on the facilities available for women at workplace.
3. List all facilities related to female safety while travelling.
4. List a few common safety measures adopted for the safety and security of female employees.
5. Discuss various laws which protect women at the workplace.

SESSION 2: GENERAL FACILITIES FOR ALL AGES AND GENDERS

Facilities and services should be designed, provided and maintained to ensure children, old age and young people's safety and emotional well-being. Following sections discuss the general facilities provided by any hotel for each age and gender.

Children

A hotel can include the following facilities for children:

(a) Children's pools with slides
(b) Baby care station
(c) Mini club or playground
(d) Baby chairs
(e) Children toilet seats
(f) Electricity plugcover
(g) Tennis lessons (charged extra)
(h) Animation theatres and mini discos
(i) Babysitting (charged extra)
(j) Cots

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Elderly Guests

Senior citizens or elderly guests are people aged 65 years or more. Such people have already attained retirement age and have fewer responsibilities on the domestic front. As such, they are more likely to spend their time socialising with people of similar age and going on leisure trips. They are also free to travel and visit friends and relatives. In such a case, the need for hotel services arises. Senior citizens deserve special attention from the hoteliers considering their age and accompanied health concerns. A hotel can include facilities such as:

(a) Sidewalks
(b) Wheelchairs
(c) Porter service
(d) Dietary provision
(e) Standby medical services

Solo Women Travellers

Hotels are beginning to cater to the needs of single women travellers, who form one of the fastest growing clientele of the travel industry. A woman whose first stay at a hotel is safe, secure and sensitive to her specific needs and concerns, would most likely choose to stay at the same hotel for her future trips, whether business or personal, both when travelling alone as well as with family. All hotels across the globe are focusing on facilities for young/single woman travellers. Some of the women-friendly facilities offered at luxury hotels across India are as follows:

(a) Exclusive floor(s) for ladies where each room is equipped with a security camera that allows the resident to see who is outside the door before opening.
(b) For single lady travellers, the hotel service ensures they receive the rooms closest to the elevator, and that they are attended only by women staff and executives.
(c) Adjoining rooms are assigned to women travellers for their safety and comfort.
(d) Lady travellers are escorted to their rooms by a female staff.

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(e) A well-curated personal care kit can be a woman's best companion, ensuring she feels confident, comfortable, and empowered. These include, skincare essential (cleanser, moisturiser) hair care essentials (shampoo and conditioner), dental care essential (toothbrush and toothpaste), hygiene essentials (sanitary pads, Ph balanced intimate wash) and personal grooming essentials (nail care kit, makeup remover, hand cream).

(f) Many hotels' airport representatives assist lady travellers. Lady chauffeurs take them to the hotels at specific destinations.

(g) Women staff, butlers and executives are assigned to lady travellers during their stay.

(h) At the spa and beauty salon, lady therapists are available for women travellers.

(i) For cultural experiences, many hotels offer complimentary yoga sessions and cookery sessions.

(j) Furthermore, female guides can be assigned to lady travellers for sightseeing and excursions on request.

(k) There may also be an in-house shopping arcade.

Unique Needs and Wants of Guests

Guests visit hotels for different purposes, the front desk team should be fast and smart to identify and categorise different types of guest and their needs. This will enable them to anticipate and fulfill the guest's expectations. The requirements or expectations of guests may vary as per the different categories of guest.

Medical travellers

Hotel staff should be sensitised towards the medical traveller's unique needs and expectations. As a matter of fact, medical guests require more hands-on care than normal guests. Hotel staff should ensure calling upon medical guests at least twice a day to make sure they okay and have everything they need. Hotel staff should be sensitised and trained to foresee these needs and any safety do's and don'ts while serving or otherwise assisting medical travellers.

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Infants or toddlers

Luxury hotels sometimes have adjoining rooms for children so as to provide the guest with more space and privacy, but this facility is against additional payment. Such hotels specifically state that it caters to families and children and may be a bit expensive. Most hotels offer several special facilities for babies and toddlers, such as children's tea-time, play areas, highchairs, and cots. Some hotels also have a crèche or childcare facilities, so that the guest can enjoy some time away from the baby and still be confident of the child's safety.

Business travellers

Such guests mostly arrive in the afternoon or late evening and depart early in the morning. Their average stay could be from 1 to 3 days. Their specific needs are as follows:

(a) Steady and fast internet.
(b) Basic office work facilities like photocopy, print, fax, etc.
(c) Mobile, iPhone, iPod or iPad chargers and connectors along with travel adaptors.
(d) Facility to connect multiple devices through Wi-Fi.
(e) International newspaper and magazines.
(f) Early bird breakfast and/or post-dinner snacks.
(g) Healthy and stimulating lunch, dinner, room service menus.
(h) Efficient and fast service, accurate invoicing.

Family guests

These are guests travelling with children, parents or relatives. The purpose of their travel is generally to visit relatives, attend marriages or special family or social functions.

Their specific needs are as follows:

(a) King-size beds, sofas, baby cot, extra towels
(b) Connecting rooms
(c) Baby sitting services
(d) Special menu for children

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(e) Kids pool and activity area for children
(f) Information about fun places in the city like amusement park, zoo, city tours, beaches, etc.
(g) Extra care and facilities if travelling with old parents

Basic safeguards and emergency procedures for senior citizens in case of emergencies

Emergencies and disasters can strike anytime without warning and force evacuation of the hotel. In such a situation, the hotel officials and relief workers may not be able to reach everyone right away. Though signages are displayed at several points in hotels, which display directions and procedures to deal with emergencies, educating the guests about them in advance at the time of check-in would go a long way to ensure safety of senior citizen guests since their attendants would be able to take preventive measures by the time the hotel staff reaches for help.

Following are a few basic safeguard and emergency procedures that can be followed:

1. Carry family contact information in elderly people's wallet.
2. Educate about availability and accessibility of support items like wheelchairs and walkers so that they can be found quickly.
3. Advise the attendants of senior citizens to keep the medicines along with them.
4. Hotel staff at front office must note alternative contact numbers of senior citizens guardians so as to easily contact them in case of emergency.

Importance and Need of Medical Facility at Hotel

Being ill when far from home is highly stressful. Thus, many hotels have basic medical facilities to provide prompt dedicated healthcare support for their guests. As more and more patients travel to other countries to avail healthcare services, it has become increasingly important for hotels and other hospitality providers to understand their role in the medical facilities at hotels.

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Optimal recovery environment for guests

Hotels that wish to cater to medical needs of guests should make it clear that their main aim is not to provide medical care, but instead, to provide first-aid and an enabling environment to access high quality healthcare facility near its vicinity. Their goal should be to make the patient as well as the patient's caregiver feel as comfortable as possible. Hotels that cater to medical tourists should consider providing the following facilities in their hotel spaces and a few of their guest rooms:

(a) All the entryways and corridors should be wheelchair accessible.
(b) Hallways and corridors should be levelled and not have any steps or abrupt vertical level changes.
(c) The elevator size should be big enough to accommodate a wheelchair, a patient with a walker or maybe even a stretcher.
(d) All doors of guest rooms should be at least 32" broad so as to accommodate wheelchairs, crutches or walkers.
(e) The rooms should be spacious enough to manoeuvre a wheelchair.
(f) All fittings and fixtures like drapery wands, controls of fan, lights, AC, etc., should be easily operable with one hand.
(g) The peep holes in the entry door should be accessible to a guest on the wheelchair.
(h) The washroom should have portable shower benches.
(i) Faucet controls and shower diverter should be easily reachable and operable.
(j) The toilet seats should be elevated or raised with grab bar.

Recreational Facilities for Child Tourists

Recreation is an activity done for enjoyment when one is not working. Thus, it is an activity of leisure, aimed to provide amusement, pleasure, fun, entertainment, refreshment or diversion from daily routine life and activities. The adult guests need different activities for

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recreation than the little ones. In order to accommodate everyone, many hotels have tried their best to address the needs of younger guests. You will find that all rooms have been furnished according to the needs of younger family members in family hotels. Hotels also provide additional equipment that will make a holiday with babies and toddlers as comfortable as possible.

Few recreational facilities for children tourists are as given below:

1. Indoor play areas

The play area includes activities such as board games, drawing and painting, face painting, photo frame making, nature craft, hair braiding, T-shirt painting, pool games, sand castles, puzzles, etc. For children below the age of four, parental supervision in the play area is essential, where the child can play with soft toys, building blocks, etc. Many hotels have a separate section dedicated to toddlers up to the age of four years. This area has soft toys and other safe, good quality, baby-friendly toys along with a space for mothers to sit, relax and keep an eye on the baby at the same time.

2. Outdoor play areas

The play areas may include mini hockey pitch on grass, volleyball court, mini golf course and numerous safe open green spaces with swings, see-saw, slides, a tricycle trail with pedal go-karts where children can play freely without disturbing the adults.

3. Go-kart course

At a go-kart course, young thrill-seekers are welcomed into a world of adrenaline-fueled excitement. These courses are carefully designed to provide an exhilarating experience while maintaining safety as the top priority. With adjustable speeds and attentive supervision from trained staff, children can confidently navigate the twists and turns of the track, honing their driving skills and boosting their self-assurance with each lap. The thrill of the race fosters a sense of adventure and competition, creating unforgettable memories for young tourists.

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4. Special restaurants for kids

Step into a special restaurant for kids, and you'll find yourself immersed in a world of imagination and wonder. These dining establishments are more than just places to eat— they're destinations for magical culinary experiences. Vibrant decor, themed menus, and interactive dining activities engage young diners, turning mealtime into an adventure. From creative dishes crafted with fresh, kid-friendly ingredients to playful presentations that ignite the imagination, every aspect of these restaurants is tailored to delight young palates and spark joy in the hearts of children and their families.

5. Kid's swimming pool

A kid's swimming pool is a vibrant hub of activity and relaxation where children can make a splash and create lasting memories. With its shallow depths, whimsical water features, and colourful surroundings, the pool offers a safe and inviting space for young tourists to cool off and have fun under the sun. Lifeguards trained in water safety keep a watchful eye on swimmers, ensuring a worry-free experience for parents and guardians. Whether it's practising swimming strokes, playing water games with newfound friends, or simply floating leisurely, the kid's swimming pool provides endless opportunities for aquatic adventure and enjoyment.

6. Soft play area and nap room

Tucked away from the hustle and bustle, a soft play area and nap room offer a haven of tranquility and relaxation for young visitors. Soft, plush cushions beckon tired bodies to rest, while gentle lighting creates a cozy ambiance conducive to relaxation. Here, children can take a break from the excitement of their adventures to recharge their energy levels or simply unwind with a book or quiet play. Whether it's a quick power nap to rejuvenate or a peaceful moment of solitude, the soft area and nap room provide a welcome retreat where children can pause, refresh, and return to their activities feeling reinvigorated.

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Practical Exercises

Activity

Visit a nearby hotel and note down the various facilities available in the hotel for each gender.

Material Required

Writing material

Procedure

- Visit a hotel nearby your area.
- Observe and list the facilities available in the hotel for each gender.
- Ask queries from the staff of hotel about facilities for each age and gender and tabulate in your notebook as given below:

Type of Guest	Facilities
Children	
Elderly guests	
Young women	
Senior citizen	
Physically challenged guest	
Pregnant women	

- After the visit, prepare a report and discuss it in the class.

Check Your Progress

A. Match the Columns

A	B
(a) For your care kit	(i) Photo frame making
(b) Indoor play areas	(ii) Nail file, nail polish remover, etc.
(c) Play areas	(iii) Recreational facilities
(d) Go-kart course	(iv) Volleyball court
(e) Nap room	(v) Nursery

B. Answer in Brief

1. Discuss the general facilities available at hotels for each age group.
2. Write a note on the recreational facilities for children tourists.
3. Discuss the need and importance for medical facilities in hotels.

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Session 3: Standard Etiquettes to be Followed with Women at Workplace

Equality of Women at Workplace

Companies around the world are currently going through a period of transformation and change. Some are expanding their business globally and there are some who wonder how the change will affect or leave an impact on their organisation.

As we know, men and women are entering the workforce in equal numbers but the majority of top management positions still belong to men. Women are working in nearly all the occupations, even the ones that are till now the exclusive domain of men. Gender discrimination at workplace remains a problem since social practices continue to restrict occupational choices by women. This leads to distortion of labour markets, depressing wages and adversely affecting business productivity.

The failure of more women to occupy the upper levels of corporate management is due to 'glass ceiling', which refers to situations where the advancement of a qualified person within the hierarchy of an organisation is restricted at a lower level because of some form of discrimination, most commonly sexism or racism. There are many reasons that cause the glass ceiling, including job segregation.

Job segregation is the concentration of women and men in different types and levels of activity and employment. Usually, men tend to be more concentrated at upper levels of various professions such as managers, supervisor, production in-charge and other executives.

Women, on the contrary, tend to be involved in lesser paid professions, such as teachers, secretaries, receptionists and nurses.

Sadly, there are several barriers that prevent women to reach any of the top positions in an organisation. One of the barriers is the environment at a workplace. Organisational culture, employees' attitude and gender bias most often limit women from actively participating

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in the organisations. Working women with family usually have to deal with family obligations due to which they often have to make a choice between their job and family. They should be offered flexibility at work. Because of lack of opportunities, women often lack the 'right' type of job experience to move forward. The experiences they have normally do not suit the promotion criteria.

However, recently organisations are trying to integrate changes to enable more women as part of the top management positions. Some facilities provided in this aspect are work-from-home, flexible timing and so on.

The given measures can be adopted to provide equality of work for women at work across both horizontal and vertical segregation.

Assign Roles or Jobs Based on Ability, Not Gender

It is a common perception that women are generally better suited for subordinate kind of roles, whereas men will excel in leadership and managerial positions. However, these kinds of stereotypes form the basis for gender discrimination and favouritism at work. Action must be taken to prevent it from happening. The hiring and work allocation must solely be based on an individual's abilities regardless of their gender.

Acknowledge and Reward Different Leadership Styles

Men, women, and individuals of the third gender (transgender) typically exhibit diverse approaches to working and leading. Male leaders often lean towards dictatorial styles, emphasising hierarchies and self-promotion over team cohesion. They tend to prioritise individual accomplishments, sometimes overshadowing the contributions of their team members. In contrast, women leaders often adopt more collaborative and consensus-building approaches, acting as representatives of their teams rather than seeking individual recognition. Their leadership style emphasises

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teamwork and inclusivity, valuing group achievements over personal accolades. Therefore, incorporating assessments that consider group accomplishments and team productivity into performance evaluations not only acknowledges but also rewards the collaborative leadership style commonly exhibited by women and other gender-diverse leaders.

Steps to Ensure Gender Equality at Workplace

1. Interviews should be conducted based on education, experience and other required qualifications.
2. Offer salary as per prevailing market rate irrespective of the gender of the person being hired.
3. Re-orient the organisation's policy of rewarding outcomes achieved instead of hours worked.

The given activities should be adopted at the workplace and must be appreciated by the organisations.

Encourage women to take the lead

Many women do not avail or grab great opportunities simply because they are hesitant and unsure of their abilities and/or qualification whereas men often go after promotions and projects they are not actually qualified for. Thus, organisations must ensure that they not only offer a level-playing field to men and women, but actively encourage women to take chance and try for opportunities they desire. External support is great for confidence-building.

Carve out new roles for women in the interest of business

It is time to change the concept, practices and environment of business. We need to welcome, celebrate and integrate the different and unique perspective women bring to business, instead of trying to relegate women into stereotyped, subservient, age-old roles. Hiring more women would lead to development of new roles and benchmarks and that is how success will be achieved.

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Bridge the gap in pay and gender disparity

Promoting gender equality at workplace must begin with equal pay for equal work. Pay disparity is a primary cause of gender gap in workforce participation. Several lawsuits also come up because of this. Paying employees fairly and equally irrespective of gender, and in a way that is based purely on qualification and experience, is the first step needed to honestly promote gender equality.

Start at the top

Gender equality requires a re-orientation of the organisational culture, where the sequence of authority and command typically starts from the top of the company. It would be better to study what other successful companies (competitors and non-competitors alike) are doing to promote gender equality and the positive effects it has on the company's culture, retention and work environment.

Have more options for women

Having more options for women in terms of job opportunities, professions, decision-making roles, and financial stability is crucial for achieving gender equality and promoting inclusivity in all spheres of society. By expanding the range of career paths available to women, we empower them to pursue their passions and talents, breaking down traditional barriers and stereotypes. Moreover, increased representation of women in decision-making positions ensures that diverse perspectives are considered, leading to more innovative and effective solutions. Financial stability plays a pivotal role in women's empowerment, providing them with the resources and independence to make choices that align with their goals and aspirations. Therefore, fostering an environment where women have equal access to opportunities, resources, and support is not only a matter of fairness but also a catalyst for social and economic progress.

Motivating Women at the Workplace

Women are often dynamic leaders of change. Yet women are still far away from equal representation in positions of power and leadership.

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Following sections discuss a few effective ways to motivate women at the workplace:

Make mentoring a must

Provide opportunities for women to gain knowledge about being a team leader or a person at the top in an organisation. This can be through aligning them with a corporate leader who can coach and guide them and then help them professionally.

Leverage the power of a personal sponsor

Some women who have proven themselves but are still stuck may be helped with a sponsorship to advance faster and stronger. Sponsors can advocate and take up the issue for their advancement within the company.

Put some creativity into rewards

When a female employee truly goes above and beyond, a cash bonus may not always be the best way to recognise the achievement. Keep in mind the value of a day off with pay to allow them time to catch up on personal enjoyments, attend a family event or deal with home responsibilities.

Give them choice in leading a project

In male-dominated departments, it is easy to draw on the same 10 people or the typical 'go-to' person for leading a project or completing an important task. Consider bringing in a woman employee for this initiative to give them an opportunity to perform and grow. Trust them.

Lifelong learning is an investment

Most companies have educational reimbursement plans for formal, long-term programmes, which are too cumbersome for women, especially for women who are single-parents or caretakers for elderly parents. Hence, short duration or 1–2 day skill development programmes may be offered, which would allow your female employees the chance to hone the skills needed to grow on the job.

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Check how they want to be listened to

When a woman shares a problem, check in to see if they just want to vent or whether they want your involvement. Men like to fix shared problems but sometimes women just want to verbalise things to feel better.

Show consistent respect and courtesy

All managers, supervisors and top officers must understand the value of day-to-day recognition and should express genuine respect for work and effort from time to time throughout the year.

Reward equally and fairly

If there is one thing that irritates anyone, male or female, is seeing someone receive a pay raise, an award, or some form of recognition when they felt deserving too. Organisations should ensure that performance of staff is evaluated fairly and appropriate rewards are given.

Behavioural Etiquettes

Etiquette can be defined as a code of behaviour, which binds people and society together. It is often said that one's behaviour is the mirror to one's character. Indeed, our behaviour reflects the kind of person we are. The educational degrees we hold carry little importance if we do not possess good manners. We need to conduct ourselves properly in almost every situation appearing for a job interview, at the workplace, in school, college or while attending any social gathering. But behavioural etiquette must be developed within oneself. It cannot be forced on anyone.

Behavioural etiquettes when dealing with colleagues

Think before you speak

Though, your close friends may get your dry sense of humour and blasé attitude, but you should keep personality quirks in check when dealing with female co-workers.

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Be courteous

Be courteous always while dealing with female guests.

Be a team player

Many companies have less staff strength, which means many employees are shouldering a bigger workload. Make sure not to overburden your co-workers by shirking or passing on your responsibilities.

Respect a closed door

If a colleague has shut her office door, stay out, even if she doesn't look occupied.

Refrain from cracking joke

One should avoid making any joke or prank at their co-worker's expense, it is not all that funny.

Writing E-mails

The easiest way to confront, blame or showdown a coworker is often via email since, by doing so, you avoid an ugly, face-to-face fight. But remember that a mail, once sent from an office computer, becomes company property.

Keep your personal matters and opinions to yourself

It is ok to have strong views, but it is not ok to push those views on your co-workers or pick fights with them when they do something you do not approve of.

Watch your language, even when you are away from your desk

Anything you do during the day even during break reflects your personality and professional self.

If problems arise, handle them privately

In case of any problem with a colleague or employer, resolve it between yourself and the counter party instead of making it public.

Behavioural etiquettes when dealing with female guests

1. Greet female guests with warmth and professionalism, using appropriate titles such as 'Miss' or 'Madam.'

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2. Respect personal space and boundaries, avoiding intrusive gestures or overly familiar behaviour.
3. Listen attentively to their needs and preferences, providing personalised service tailored to their requirements.
4. Maintain a courteous and respectful demeanor at all times, refraining from making any comments or engaging in behaviour that could be seen as disrespectful or discriminatory.
5. Ensure a safe and secure environment for female guests, addressing any concerns promptly and discreetly.
6. Demonstrate sensitivity, professionalism, and attentiveness in interactions to enhance their overall experience in the hospitality and tourism industry.
7. Offer assistance with luggage or any other needs without assuming help is required.
8. Provide clear directions and explanations, ensuring they feel confident navigating the facility or destination.
9. Respect cultural and personal preferences, such as dietary restrictions or preferences for female staff assistance.
10. Offer amenities tailored to their preferences, such as feminine hygiene products or spa treatments geared towards women.
11. Create inclusive spaces and activities that cater to diverse interests and preferences, ensuring female guests feel included and valued.
12. Train staff to recognise and address any instances of harassment or uncomfortable behaviour, ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for all guests.
13. Encourage feedback and actively listen to any concerns or suggestions from female guests, demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement and customer satisfaction.

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Practical Exercises

Activity

Visit any hotel in your vicinity and observe the standard etiquettes practised while dealing with female workers and guests. On the basis of your observation, prepare a report on behavioural etiquettes a while dealing with female workers and guests.

Material Required

Writing material

Procedure

- Visit a hotel nearby your area.
- Discuss with the hotel staff about the standard etiquettes practised while dealing with female workers and guests.
- Note all the etiquettes followed by the hotel staff.
- Ask queries about the hotel policy on dealing with female staff and guests.
- Prepare a report on behavioural etiquettes while dealing with female workers and guests.

Check Your Progress

A. State True or False

1. Pay disparity and gender gap are two of the biggest recurring issues at the workplace.
2. The disparity in pay generally occurs when a woman decides to start a family.
3. Most companies have educational reimbursement plans for formal, long-term programmes.
4. Etiquette can be defined as a code of laws that binds society together.
5. Always smile while welcoming the guest in your hotel.

B. Answer in Brief

1. Briefly explain the measures that could be adopted to ensure equality at the workplace.
2. What are the behavioural etiquettes while attending to female guests?

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Unit 3

Health and Hygiene

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Ensuring cleanliness and hygiene within work environments is paramount for promoting a safe, healthy, and productive atmosphere. In this unit, explore into the critical aspects of regular cleaning practices around work areas and the significance they hold in maintaining optimal working conditions. From the fundamental reasons behind cleaning to waste management and pest control, each facet contributes to fostering a clean and hazard-free workplace. Further, the unit looks at the necessity of waste segregation, emphasising its role in minimising environmental impact and maximising resource efficiency. Additionally, it addresses the importance of pest control measures to safeguard against health risks and property damage. Maintenance work takes centre stage as we highlight its role in upholding infrastructure integrity and prolonging equipment lifespan. Adequate ventilation and lighting are essential considerations, promoting comfort, well-being, and productivity among employees. Furthermore, meticulous cleaning and maintenance routines in food storage, preparation, and serving areas are imperative for upholding food hygiene standards and preventing cross-contamination. The unit also stress the significance of maintaining high standards of personal hygiene, including handwashing and grooming practices, to ensure a safe and professional working environment.

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This unit aims to equip with the knowledge and skills necessary to uphold cleanliness standards and promote a healthy work environment conducive to success.

In this Unit, you are going to learn about the importance of cleaning around the workplace and garbage management. It explains the importance of personal hygiene practices used in customer service areas and about pest control practices. It also elaborates on the precautionary health measures followed while working in a customer service area.

SESSION 1: CLEANING AROUND WORKPLACE

Importance of Regular Cleaning Around Work Area

Cleanliness is a state of being free of dirt, dust and possibly germs also. Clean surroundings help provide a healthy environment and a safe workplace. It is also expected that a clean workplace has protection from germs as well.

The workplace environment and cleanliness has a bearing on the employees' performance, safety, health, efficiency, productivity and well-being. However, maintaining cleanliness standards may sometimes be difficult with busy production schedules, quantum of business and workload, which may cause standards to fall.

Cleanliness of any restaurant is a major factor contributing to its success. Restaurant workers should properly clean and sanitise dining areas, specially all the surface areas with which customers come in contact, such as table tops, chairs, bar tops, etc. Separate clean towels or dusters should be used for surface area cleaning of different areas of the restaurant. The condiment bottles and menu cards should also be disinfected regularly.

Reasons for Cleaning

Reasons for cleaning a workplace are:

1. Regular cleaning helps in providing a safe working environment.

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2. A clean area has a lower load of harmful bacteria. Unsanitary food handling practices are the cause of most food-related illnesses and a single case of food poisoning linked to a restaurant is enough to destroy your reputation.
3. Having a well-kept work area also reduces the number of accidents that occur due to workplace hazards. Slipping in a kitchen or restaurant spells disaster and may result in serious consequences.
4. Proper cleaning of work area promotes workplace efficiency and productivity.
5. A clean kitchen and restaurant prevents cross-contamination. Cross-contamination is the transfer of disease-causing agents from one point to another. e.g., by using a kitchen cloth to clean a chopping board used for meat and then using the same cloth to clean the utensils or kitchen countertops.
6. Restrooms are another area that requires regular and frequent cleaning and maintenance. This is especially true since restrooms are mostly shared by employees and visitors. So proper cleaning of toilets, door handles and sink faucets is a must.

Waste and Waste Segregation

Waste material refers to those items that are useless, unusable, unwanted or discarded from further use. The waste material produced by the human activities result in a negative effect on the environment. The waste may be solid, liquid, radioactive or gaseous in nature. Organic waste can be reused for generating power or electricity.

Waste segregation is the process of placing waste of different types into separate waste containers so it can be disposed easily. Waste can be broadly classified as: biodegradable and non-biodegradable. Biodegradable waste is the type of waste that is derived from plant or animal sources and which can be degraded by other living organisms e.g., food waste and paper waste. Non-biodegradable waste is that waste that cannot be decomposed by the biological processes, e.g., plastic and glass.

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Reasons for segregation of waste material

1. It enables recycling of waste.
2. It makes the work of the waste sorter easier.
3. Biodegradable waste can produce energy, which can be used for good purposes.
4. Many parts of waste can be reused for other purpose like compost making.
5. Improper disposal of hazardous waste can cause serious environmental and health problems.
6. Proper segregation is the basic requirement for need to be pleased.

Classification of waste material

The classification and method of disposal is given in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Classification of waste

	Wet waste	Dry waste	Sanitary waste	Garden waste	Hazardous household waste	Debris/ Rubbish	E-waste
Examples	Vegetable, fruit peel, egg shell, teabag, coffee powder, etc.	Plastic, paper, glass, rubber, etc.	Used sanitary napkins, ear buds, etc.	Leaves, branches, dried plants, etc.	Medicine, pesticide, cosmetic, etc.	Demolition waste, broken glass, broken furniture, etc.	Tubelights, CDs, mobile phones, batteries, etc.
Waste handling and control	• Do not put in plastic cover • They can be turned into compost • Clean daily	• Clean and store • Give it to recycler	• Do not throw any where • Wrap in news paper, mark it with red cross before disposal	• Handover to garbage collection trucks	• Do not mix with other waste • Store carefully • Hand it over to specific recyclers	• Call garbage trucks or other agencies for pick up	• Do not mix with other waste • Store carefully • Hand it over to specific recyclers

To assist segregation of waste, the following guidelines may be followed:

1. Colour codes for different types of waste is given in Table 3.2.

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2. Collect in clear disposal bags to ensure that the waste is segregated correctly.

Table 3.2: Colour code for waste

Green	Blue	Brown	Black
Example: Paper cardboard	Example: Plastics	Example: Food waste for composting	Example: General mixed waste

PPEs required for handling waste

The following Personal Protective Equipments are required for handling waste or trash can:

1. Gloves
2. Face mask
3. Garbage bag
4. Garbage bin or dustbin

Standard operating procedure for handling bin waste

1. Pick up ashtrays and empty contents in the garbage bin.
2. Pick up all trash from the counter area and place it in the garbage bin.
3. Remove all trash collected in the garbage bin and transfer it to the garbage collecting bag or the soiled bag in the attendant's trolley.
4. Wipe out trash containers with a damp cloth and dry.
5. Place a fresh liner in each trash bin.
6. The bath trash container should be placed on the left hand side of the sink without liner.
7. The bedroom trash container should be placed under the desk or next to the dresser.
8. Check the condition of matchboxes and place it with logo sitting up, next to ashtrays.

Pest Control at Workplace

Pests can cause discomfort or uneasiness and also spread diseases. Thus, a guest is very likely to be upset if they find pests or insects anywhere in the premises. The hotel should have procedures for dealing with pests. Insect or pests enter buildings seeking food,

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shelter or surroundings having the right temperature and humidity to grow and breed.

The key to successful pest control is eliminating one or more of the conducive factors, which help in growing. Sanitation is an important part of control. Successful pest control should begin with good cleaning practices. It is important to know something about the habits of the pests in order to take proper preventive measures and to select and apply appropriate pest control products correctly. A few common pests found in hotels are insects like flies, cockroaches, silverfish, fleas, ants and bed bugs (Fig. 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4), mice and rats.

Signs of pests may include droppings, spots on walls and surfaces, eggs and cocoons. If you see any of these signs, inform your superior or the housekeeping supervisor immediately.

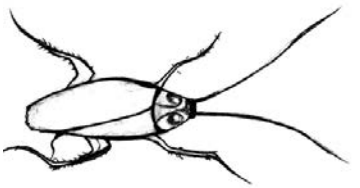


Fig. 3.1: Cockroach

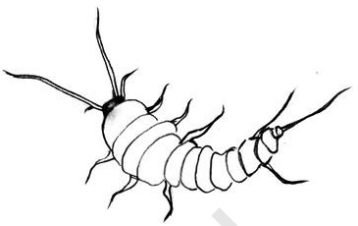


Fig. 3.2: Silver fish



Fig. 3.3: House fly



Fig. 3.4: Bed bug

Maintenance Work and its Importance

Maintenance problems should always be reported well in time as guests expect everything in the working area to be in, working condition. Reported faults should be dealt with quickly and efficiently to prevent accidents and inconvenience to the guests as these could lead to a significant loss of revenue.

Examples of items that may require repair in the work area include the following:

1. Broken chair
2. Broken tables
3. Light bulbs
4. Dripping taps
5. Faulty air conditioning

Maintenance request form

When a maintenance problem is found, it must be reported through filling a maintenance request form. It is important to fill the form correctly so as to ensure that relevant information is communicated to the maintenance department. This is done in order to avoid misunderstanding and confusion.

This maintenance request form is usually prepared in triplicate, one each for the following staff:

1. Worker (i.e. plumber the electrician)

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2. Chief Maintenance Engineer
3. Department where the problem is to be addressed.

This is done for record-keeping and follow-up.

Sample of a maintenance request form

Maintenance Request Form No. 1234

Department_____
By_____Date_____
Supervisor approval_____
Location_____
Problem_____
Assigned to_____Date_____
Date complete_____Time_____
Completed by_____
Remarks_____

Originator's Copy

Table 3.3: Main areas requiring maintenance

Areas	Maintenance
Plumbing and water systems	Central heating, boilers, spa, pool, sanitation, filtration, cleaning, irrigation, laundry, guest rooms, fountains, drainage
Electrical equipment	Lighting, batteries, generators, metres, energy management
HVAC	(heating, ventilation and air conditioning) Temperatures, comfort, extraction, refrigeration, cooling systems, air supply
Lighting	Natural, in room, public areas, task, emergency, exterior, colour, mood, ambience, decoration, energy saving
Laundry	Laundry equipment, energy management, wastewater
Telecommunication	Internet, switchboard (Private Automatic Branch Exchange), facsimile, intranet, Wi-Fi, website, e-mail, in-house pagers, mobile telephones

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Safety and security	Signage, equipment, testing, electronic locking systems, alarm system, security lighting, parameter fences, fire system, sprinklers, CCTV, in-room safes, fingerprint recognition
Waste management	Recycling systems
Food service equipment	Kitchen equipment, refrigeration, ovens, storage, buffet units, cook-chill units, dishwasher, ice machines, coffee machines, vending machines
Energy management	Cost control, employees, customers, law, comfort, utility pricing
Building exterior	Roof, walls, foundation, drainage, structure, sewers, water features, insulation, windows
Parking area and grounds	Presentation, security, lighting, maintenance, irrigation, management and general upkeep
Design	Renovation, refurbishments, interior, comfort, fashion, health and safety

Proper Ventilation

Ventilation means free passage of clean and fresh air, supply of outside air or the removal of inside air from an enclosed space. It is the process of supplying and removing air from a building, which could be achieved by natural and mechanical means.

Ventilation provides fresh air free from unwanted fumes, smoke, steam or vapours. It includes both the exhaust system to remove stale air and the system that provides fresh air. Good ventilation protects one from unpleasant odours, irritating pollutants, and potentially dangerous gases like carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide.

A well-designed and properly-operated ventilation system also discourages the growth of mould and mildew, which can cause or aggravate allergic reactions and lung problems, such as asthma. Since people generally spend about 90 per cent of their time inside buildings, indoor air pollution can actually be a bigger health risk than outdoor air pollution.

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Air conditioning system

An air conditioning system set at an optimum temperature cleans air and helps regulate humidity. The air conditioning system should be regularly checked and maintained for smooth functioning. Additionally, buildings should be constructed in such a way that fresh and clean air is adequately available.

Advantages of air conditioning

1. Improved quality and productivity of work
2. Controlled and maintained humidity
3. Improved comfortable and relaxed indoor environment (replaced by psychological atmosphere)

Maintenance of central air conditioning system

1. Always check for the possibility of leakage in the refrigerant or air conditioning system.
2. Look for loose or worn drive belts.
3. Check internal operating pressure in the system.
4. For regular maintenance, a filter should be checked once a month to see if it needs cleaning or replacing. Change the filter and hold it to a bright light, then try to look through it if you can see the light easily.
5. The outer condensing unit should be cleaned, especially near the inlet and outlet discharge grills. Use a brush or hose to clean out leaves and wind blown dirt or dust.
6. Vacuum clean the system once a month to clean the louvres, and once in a year, remove them and clean the back of the louvre as well as the inside of the ducts as much as possible.

Failure or non-functioning of Air Conditioning (AC) system

1. Check the thermostat settings, ensuring it's set to "cool" and temperature is lower than room temp.
2. Verify power supply: confirm power to AC unit, check circuit breaker, and ensure AC power switch is on.
3. Inspect air filters for dirt and clogs, replace or clean as needed.
4. Ensure air vents and registers are open and unobstructed.

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5. Check outdoor unit for debris, ensure fan is operational.
6. Verify refrigerant levels, consult professional if low.
7. Look for ice build-up on evaporator coil or refrigerant lines, allow thawing if present.
8. Inspect ductwork for leaks and seal them.
9. Ensure proper insulation in walls, ceilings, and around windows and doors.
10. Check compressor operation and for any unusual noises.
11. Consider ambient temperature's impact on AC efficiency.
12. Schedule professional inspection if troubleshooting steps fail or for complex repairs.

Inadequate cooling

1. Turn off the power.
2. Remove the plug from the socket.
3. Clean the filter or change it, if required.
4. Check the coils. If ice has formed on them, turn on the power and the fan to melt it.
5. Clean the condensate outlet/drain.
6. Finally, check and clean the outdoor compressor.

Importance of Lighting in an Area

Sufficient lighting from a natural or artificial source must be provided in a commercial organisation to facilitate safe movement of workers around the workplace and to allow them to perform their job without having to adopt awkward postures of body or strain their eyes to see. It also helps avoid accidents, such as tripping, slipping, falling, breakage, etc.

Factors to be taken into account

The following factors must be considered while choosing the kind of lighting at the workplace:

1. The type of activity or work to be carried out in an area
2. The nature of hazards and risks at the workplace
3. The work environment and culture
4. Level of illumination, including both natural and artificial light
5. Contrast reflections

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Additional lighting may be needed for some types of work in an organisation or at places of particular risks (such as, landing of stairs, corridors, lobby, etc.). Different amount of light may be needed at different times of the day. Also, too much lighting can also weigh heavy on the viewer's gaze or appear too glaring.

Cleaning and Maintenance of Food Storage Area

Following points should be followed while cleaning and maintaining a storage area:

1. Cleaning of floors, walls and shelves in coolers, freezers, and dry storage areas should be done on a regular basis.
2. Always keep all storage areas dry.
3. Clean up spills and leaks right away to stop contamination of other foods.
4. Do not line shelves. Make sure that shelves are open so that air can flow between foods.
5. All items should be kept 6 inches away from the walls and floors.
6. All items should be kept 12 inches away from the ceiling.
7. Make sure each food item has a specific place for storing and is labelled accordingly.
8. Repair any cracks or crevices in the storage area walls.
9. Repair the doors and windows that do not close tightly.

Cleaning the Refrigerator

(i) Empty the shelves and wipe them down daily, using a food-grade cleaning product carefully.

(ii) Sanitise it with a food-grade sanitiser.

(iii) Always limit the time for which any food is placed outside the refrigerator to not more than 30 minutes.

(iv) Let your supervisor know if you see any food that is out of date or stale.

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Table 3.4: Cleaning of cool room (Walk-in)

1. Pre-clean	• Move food from the cool room to an other refrigerator if possible. • Remove any food matter or debris on the floor, walls or shelves.
2. Wash	Always wash the interior (including shelving and seals) and exterior walls with a food-grade detergent and hot water.
3. Sanitise	Always rinse and sanitise with a food-grade sanitiser for safety.
4. Dry	Rinse and allow to air dry.
5. Clean up	Replace food if you have moved it.

Cleaning the Freezer

Empty the freezer, then defrost, clean and sanitise it with a food-grade sanitiser. If refrigerators and freezers are defrosted regularly, they will work better and consume less electricity.

Cleaning the Food Preparation Surfaces

Microorganisms can easily spread through the surfaces which touch food. One way to limit the spread of food-borne bacteria is to thoroughly clean food preparation and dining surfaces before and after cooking.

To clean surfaces, the following points must be kept in mind:

1. Always wipe out spills on the kitchen surface immediately, using a paper towel or clean cloth.
2. Wash counter tops with hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before moving onto the next.
3. To sanitise counter tops and tabletops, use a bleach-water solution (approximately 1 tablespoon added to1 gallon of water).
4. Allow the surface to air-dry without touching it.

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Cleaning the Serving Area (Restaurant Coffee Shop and Specialty Restaurant)

Restaurants and dining areas should be cleaned daily before the opening time. The points given below should be followed while cleaning the serving area:

1. Collect all the items required for cleaning a particular place.
2. Collect the dining area keys from the In-charge or security department.
3. Turn on the lights if needed so that the entire area is clearly visible.
4. On clear mornings or in the day time, draw the curtains to allow natural light to come in.
5. Observe the entire area so as to plan the work before starting.
6. Before starting to clean the restaurant, all the chairs should be moved away from the tables to make room for proper cleaning.
7. Vacuum all the carpeted areas and upholstery.
8. If there are any food spills on the carpet, do the spot cleaning as per the standard procedure.
9. If the floor is not carpeted, sweep and mop the floor.
10. Clear the garbage from the service station.
11. Dust all the furniture in the restaurant.
12. Polish the furniture as and when required.
13. Dust all the high ceiling, niches, pictures or artwork, and corners using a feather duster to remove cobwebs.
14. Clean and disinfect the telephones.
15. Wipe the side stations and host stations.
16. Dust the Point of Sale (POS) terminals with appropriate cleaners.
17. Polish all the brass and copper items using proper cleaning agents.
18. Wipe and dust the mirrors and windows.
19. All maintenance issues should be immediately reported to the engineering department or the control desk.
20. If any lost items are found, inform the housekeeping control desk or the hotel security.
21. Remove all dirty table linens and replenish them with fresh ones.

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22. Replenish clean linen supplies on a daily basis.
23. Return the keys to the security department.
24. Fill up the cleaning register and submit to the housekeeping control desk.

Cleaning the Linen and Laundry Area

Linen is a type of fabric made up from very fine fibres of flax plant. This fabric is very soft, sturdy, cool and absorbent. In housekeeping, the word 'linen' refers to household fabric goods intended for daily use, such as bedding, tablecloths and towels, etc.

Laundry area is an area or department in a house, hotel or institution where clothes and linen can be washed and ironed. It is a department that collects all soiled linen for washing and laundering. This is to ensure continuous supply of well-laundered linen to the customers and staff.

A linen room or linen area is earmarked for the following:

1. Checking and sorting of the fresh linens
2. Storage of the fresh linens
3. Distribution of fresh linens on the floor and other areas
4. Maintaining stock or record of linen
5. Stitching and monogramming of all the hotel uniforms
6. Uniform storage and issues

Cleaning of Rooms

The Customer Service Executive needs to pay attention to ensure that the guests' rooms are clean. This reflects well on the housekeeping department and the hotel's reputation. It also adds to the overall satisfaction level of the guests.

Preparing to clean

In most organisations, the room attendant or housekeeping worker's workday begins with reporting to the housekeeping desk or control room. Some of the tasks they perform are:

1. Report to the desk for attendance and work allocation.

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2. Collect room assignments, room status reports and keys.
3. In the floor pantry, the room attendant assembles and organises the chamber trolley with the required linen, guest and cleaning supplies.

The procedure to clean the room should be as per the room status report. The rooms being vacated should be cleaned first so that these rooms are made ready for the next guest at the earliest. However, occupied rooms may be done earlier, if the guest requests. The rooms blocked for arrivals should be cleaned before the expected arrival time. The rooms with Do Not Disturb (DND) and Double Lock (DL) signs should not be disturbed until 2 pm or till the signage is taken off by the occupant of the room. However, the occupants of such a room may be called up after 2 pm to check if the room could be cleaned. Many hotels have a security policy whereby no room is left unattended for more than 24 hours.

Procedure for cleaning a guest room

1. Always keep the room properly ventilated.
2. Remove or replace the soiled linen and dustbin.
3. Make the bed.
4. Dust off different room surfaces.
5. Replenish room supplies with fresh packs of toilettries, snacks, drinking water, etc.
6. Cleaning the bathroom:
   (a) Clean the shower and tub area everyday.
   (b) Clean the vanity and mirror.
   (c) Clean the toilet bowl and exterior surfaces.
   (d) Remove and replace the bathroom supplies and guest amenities.
   (e) Check the light fixtures, bathroom walls and electrical outlets and call for maintenance and repairs if needed.
7. Vacuum clean the guestroom floor.
8. Finally, check the room as per the organisation's standard checklist.
9. Turn off the lights, close and lock the door.
10. Note down the condition and status of the room on the assignment/job sheet and proceed to the next room on your schedule.

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Cleaning the Public Areas

The public areas are frequented by guests and needs regular cleaning. These include lifts, parking area, front office and lobby.

Cleaning the front office and lobby

In a hotel, the lobby is mostly active for 24 hours. Thus, the furniture, carpets, flooring, and ceiling need to be kept extremely clean at all times. Following must be ensured:

1. Always empty all ashtrays into the trash ensuring there are no burning cigarette butts.
2. Wipe clean and restore the ash trays to proper places.
3. Empty the dustbins placed near the front office desk.
4. Replace their lining and put them back in their place.
5. Properly dust and wipe the telephone, fax machine, computers and kiosks.
6. Sanitise the telephone device, computer keyboard, and touchpad of the kiosk.
7. Carefully remove cobwebs from the corners of walls, crevices and ceiling.
8. Dust the walls, windows, furniture and floor.
9. Remove stains on the carpet and furniture.
10. Carefully clean all the artifacts using a damp and soft cloth.
11. Sweep and mop the flooring of the lobby and front office desk area.
12. Dust and polish all the vases, paintings and art pieces.
13. Play a very light and soothing instrumental music for guest's comfort.

Food Hygiene and Cross-contamination

Food handlers and operators are responsible for the health of their customers. As such, food safety requires great attention. Safe food implies freedom from infection or disease of any kind that may affect the health of people.

Food contamination results from any physical object, chemical or bacteria which may get into the food because of poor food handling or cleaning practices or from another food source.

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Harmful microorganisms present in one food can contaminate another food. This process is known as cross-contamination and it means transfer of microorganisms or bacteria from one food to another.

The following points must be kept in mind to prevent cross-contamination of food:

1. Storing raw and cooked food separately and not next to or on top of each other.
2. Prepare cooked and raw food on separate tables.
3. Colour code the equipment such as chopping boards and knives for handling only one type of food.
4. All food must be obtained from an approved source or licensed vendor.
5. Perishable food must be kept at an optimum temperature.
6. Thermometers should be used to monitor the temperatures of perishable foods.
7. Proper hand washing facilities should be made available and must be used.
8. Clean and sanitise the equipment, utensils and work surfaces regularly.
9. Sanitisers should be used regularly.
10. Wiping cloths must be properly stored.
11. Floor and overhead covering should be adequately used.
12. Adequate water supply, sewage and trash disposal should be done.
13. Gloves and hair restraints must be used by food handlers.
14. Barbecue pits outside of buildings should not be located within 10 feet of combustible walls or roofs or other combustible material.
15. Portable fire extinguishers must be provided for barbecue pits to prevent fire accident.
16. Use a separate equipment for each food item.

Practical Exercises

Activity

Visit any hospitality organisation and observe the process of waste segregation.

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Material Required

Notebook, writing material

Procedure

- Visit a nearby hotel.
- Discuss with the managers about hotel waste and waste segregation being done by them.
- Note down the process of waste collection and segregation.
- Prepare a report after the visit and present in the class.

Check Your Progress

A. Match the Columns

A		B	
(a)	Hazardous Household Waste	(i)	Restaurant and coffee shop
(b)	Brown-Colour Code	(ii)	Batteries
(c)	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	(iii)	Food waste for composting
(d)	Serving Area	(iv)	Pest
(e)	Spread Diseases	(v)	Medicine
(f)	E-waste	(vi)	Glove

B. Answer in Brief

1. Write the procedure of handling waste from dustbins.
2. Name the common pests found in the restaurant area. How can their infestation be controlled?
3. Explain the procedure for cleaning and maintenance of food storage area.
4. What is the meaning of 'waste segregation'? Explain waste handling methods in a hotel.

SESSION 2: IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL HYGIENE PRACTICES

It is important to understand the necessity of maintaining hygiene in the hospitality industry. All staff must ensure that the procedures in the followed are safe and hygienic work environment. These procedures vary according to the tasks and the business policy standards.

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Hand Washing

Such a facility is a must for workers to maintain good standards of personal hygiene. Workers need to wash their hands from time to time, that is before and after eating meals, after visiting the toilet, after handling chemicals or handling greasy machinery, etc.

The number of wash basins needed would depend upon the nature of work being carried out at the workplace and the number of workers. Thus, where the work involves exposure to infectious or contaminating substances, separate wash basins should be provided in the work area besides those provided with toilets.

Hand washing facilities

Hand washing facilities should be set up keeping in mind the following:

1. It should be accessible at all times from work areas, eating areas and toilets.
2. It should be separate for toilets and work or eating areas.
3. It should contain both hot and cold water taps or mixers.
4. It should be supplied with soft, non-irritating soap (preferably from a soap dispenser).
5. It should contain hygienic hand drying facilities. For example, automatic air dryers or paper towels.

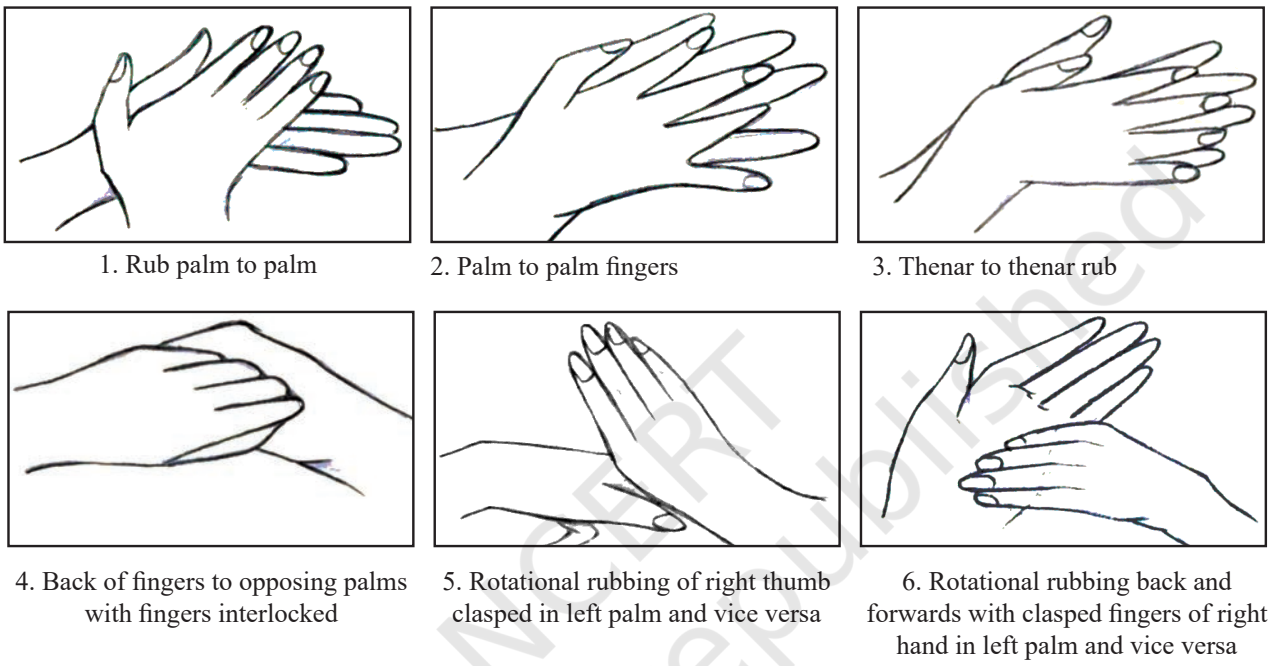
Hand hygiene technique

One must take off the watch, rings and any accessories worn on hands before washing the hands properly for best results. The following procedure must be adhered to:

1. Wet the hands under clean running water.
2. Take some liquid soap on the palm and rub both hands together to make a soapy lather while keeping hands away from running water.
3. Rub the palms, between fingers, back of the hands and fingers, thumbs, fingertips and wrists for at least 20 seconds (same procedure also applies to disinfection of hands with an alcohol hand rub).
4. After rubbing, rinse hands thoroughly under clean running water.

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5. Dry hands thoroughly with a clean, absorbent cotton, paper towel or hand dryer. Towels for drying hands should never be shared between people.
6. If necessary, use a paper towel to turn off the tap in order to avoid touching the faucet again with washed hands.



1. Rub palm to palm
2. Palm to palm fingers
3. Thenar to thenar rub
4. Back of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked
5. Rotational rubbing of right thumb clasped in left palm and vice versa
6. Rotational rubbing back and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa

Fig.3.5: Hand washing technique

Hand hygiene resources

An organisation should ensure that following materials are available for maintaining hand hygiene:

1. Provide dustbins covered with a lid for disposing used tissue paper.
2. Provide dispensers and alcohol-based handrub at convenient spots. If there are sinks available, ensure that supplies for hand washing (that is, liquid soap and disposable towels) are always available.

Thumb rule for regular personal hygiene

Personal hygiene is important because bacteria in our body (skin, nose, mouth or hand) can be transferred to foods and the people who eat the food can get sick.

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Therefore, personal hygiene plays an important role in preventing cross-contamination.

Following are the thumb rules for regular personal hygiene:

1. Shower daily.
2. Brush your teeth regularly.
3. Keep hair free of lice and dandruff.
4. Do not chew gum or tobacco.
5. Wash hands regularly.
6. Gargle after smoking and use a breath freshener.
7. Food handlers must do the following:
   (a) Be clothed in clean clothing.
   (b) Keep their hands, fingernails and body clean.
   (c) Wash hands thoroughly before commencing work, after using the toilet and at other times.
   (d) Wear water-proof dressing over wounds.
   (e) Do not smoke while handling food.
   (f) Ensure that food is kept safe and protected from pests and dirt.
8. Wash hands:
   (a) after visiting the toilet.
   (b) after blowing your nose, especially if you are involved in food preparation or handling of unprotected food.
   (c) after cleaning your face.
   (d) after handling the garbage or spoiled foods.
   (e) before and after handling different types of food. E.g., uncooked and cooked (to prevent cross-contamination).
   (f) after handling money
   (g) after tea and meal break
   (h) after clean-up
   (i) before handling unprotected food or preparing food.

Grooming Standards

Professional grooming standards play important role in hospitality sector. However, there are some general guidelines that can apply to individuals of all genders, including men, women, and transgender individuals, in professional settings:

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1. Personal Hygiene: Maintain good personal hygiene by bathing regularly, brushing teeth, and wearing clean and appropriate clothing.

2. Hair: Keep hair neat, clean, and styled in a way that is appropriate for the workplace. This may involve keeping hair trimmed and styled in a professional manner.

3. Facial Hair: For those with facial hair, keep it groomed and trimmed neatly. This may involve regular shaving or grooming to maintain a tidy appearance.

4. Makeup: If wearing makeup, keep it subtle and appropriate for the workplace environment. Avoid heavy or overly dramatic makeup styles.

5. Nails: Keep nails clean and trimmed. Avoid excessively long nails or overly elaborate nail designs, as they may be impractical or unprofessional.

6. Jewellery: Limit jewellery to pieces that are tasteful and not overly distracting. Avoid wearing excessive or noisy jewellery that may be disruptive in a professional setting.

7. Breath: Maintain fresh breath by practising good oral hygiene, including twice regular brushing and flossing, and using breath mints or mouthwash as needed.

8. Body Odour: Take steps to prevent body odour by showering regularly, using deodorant or antiperspirant, and wearing clean clothing made from breathable fabrics.

9. Footwear: Wear appropriate footwear that is clean, polished, and suitable for the workplace environment. Avoid wearing overly casual or worn-out shoes that may detract from a professional appearance.

Practical Exercises

Activity

Visit a hotel to know about the personal grooming of the staff.

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Material Required

Writing material

Procedure

- Visit any hospitality organisation.
- Discuss about the uniform and personal hygiene practised by their staff.
- Observe hand washing techniques used by them at the workplace.
- Note all the details in your notebook.
- After the visit, prepare a report and present in the class.

Check Your Progress

A. State whether True or False

1. Teeth should be brushed twice daily.
2. Chewing gum in front of guests is a good practice.
3. Deodorants are used daily to ensure that no body odour is present.
4. Always wash hands after cleaning-up any area.
5. Female staff should not wear too much jewellery.

B. Answer in Brief

1. Discuss the hand hygiene techniques a customer service executive can follow.
2. What are the ways in which a customer service executive can look groomed?
3. Explain the important points to be followed for proper dental care.

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Unit 4

Safety at Workplace

Customer Service Executives (Meet and Greet) perform a physically demanding job. They are on their feet for a full shift of eight hours during which they perform various tasks that are demanding for the body. It is therefore imperative to ensure safe working conditions for the customer service staff.

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The customer service executives must train employees to recognise potentially hazardous conditions (such as listen below) and take corrective actions before they cause injuries like sprains, strains, falls, etc.

1. Wet floors and slippery walkways
2. Messy floors
3. Equipment left out in the way
4. Improper lifting techniques

Best practices for material handling, and slip, trip and fall prevention will be discussed in this unit. You will gain an understanding of how to identify at-risk situations and how to avoid serious injury or illness.

Customer service staff are exposed to a variety of hazards while on the job and perform a variety of tasks throughout their work shift. Proper training to identify the hazards and risks associated with these tasks will help prevent employee injury. Some routine activities for a Customer Service Executive (Meet and Greet) are:

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1. Long hours of standing
2. Frequent bending to pick up luggage
3. Squatting, kneeling, stretching to pick and carry luggage
4. Twisting or crouching while picking and loading luggage
5. Lifting of heavy luggage and belongings of guests
6. Pushing of luggage trolley or cart

The above are only examples of situations where the body is under pressure. There are countless numbers of other situations that truly challenge Customer Service Executives (Meet and Greet).

Tips for staying safe

1. Always wear comfortable shoes.
2. Stretch your back, arms and shoulders properly while performing various tasks.
3. Report any pain.
4. Use strategies to make work easier. Handle all work with care and caution so as to avoid injury.
5. Eat healthy, exercise and sleep well.

In this Unit, you will learn the workplace safety standards to ensure a hazard-free environment and avoid disruption due to personal injuries and health issues. This unit covers the following major topics:

- Precautionary measures to avoid work hazards.
- Follow standard safety procedures.
- Use safety tools and personal protective equipment.

SESSION 1: PREVENTION OF WORK HAZARDS

In order to provide high quality service to customers, the pace of work in hospitality industry is usually fast and the working hours long. In such a situation, there is an increased risk of accidents from knocks and falls, slips, trips, burns, cuts, scalds, electrocution, fire and explosion. Workplace accidents and diseases can result in increased absenteeism, sickness, disability or even death leading to loss of productivity. All these can be and must be prevented. A safe and healthy working environment contributes to the well-being,

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morale and productivity of employees. Customer Service Executives are an important section of this industry and as such, must know the probable hazards and how to avoid them.

Assessment and Analysis of Hazards

A hazard assessment is the process of identifying hazards so they can be controlled or eliminated through modification of prevailing practices, behaviour, work conditions or combination of these; so that injury, illness of workers in workplace or damage to property can be minimised or eliminated completely.

It is a good practice to establish systematic procedures for the identification, evaluation and control of both existing and potential hazards at the workplace. Employers should identify workplace hazards by reviewing both routine and non-routine activities carried out by workers and contractors, and the equipment used. These hazards can be evaluated by considering the probable incidents that can occur.

Measures can be developed to control the hazards. For this, one should initiate a hazard control programme that lists—(i) all the steps necessary to protect workers from exposure to a substance or process, (ii) the procedure necessary to monitor exposure of workers and their health to hazardous substances and (iii) a written policy outlining the methods being used to control the exposure and how the controls will be monitored.

Before implementation, it is advisable to test the feasibility of the recommended measures. Documentation of the hazard evaluation process is important.

Minimising hazards in the work area

Hazards can be controlled by elimination of the potential dangers from the working area or substituting them with safer means and methods. Mostly, the department of engineering or the engineering staff monitors and controls the maintenance of machines, equipment,

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ventilation systems and other processes which can be a major source of injury at the workplace. It can also suggest modification in the process of doing work including the timing, work policies and other rules and practices. Another effective way of minimising hazards is by providing appropriate personal protective equipment and making sure it is properly worn and maintained by the staff.

So, necessary steps must be taken to reduce the chance of injuries in the work area such as:

1. Communicate with the staff about health and safety
2. Risk assessment
3. Promptly dealing with hazards
4. Invite feedback from staff on safety improvements
5. Display safety information clearly in a prominent place
6. Maintain hygiene and cleanliness
7. Provide first-aid supplies
8. Meet fire safety standards
9. Learn from any mistakes
10. Keep safety procedures updated

The points to follow for minimising hazards are given in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Common hazards and their preventive measures

Type of Hazard	Causes	Factors associated with hazard	Solutions/preventive measures
Musculoskeletal Injuries and Disorders	Many jobs have risks that can lead to sprains and strains to the back and other parts of the body.	Awkward postures, manual handling movements, prolonged standing, repetitive movements	• Use ramps rather than stairs. • Use a trolley for heavy luggage or when carrying over long distance. • Push rather than pull trolleys. • Ensure trolleys are properly maintained. E.g., tyres are fully inflated and wheels aligned. Wear proper shoes.

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Chemical Hazards	Some chemicals are hazardous and may be corrosive, irritating, toxic, flammable or carcinogenic with some chemicals causing burns or skin rashes from irritation or allergy.	Accidental inhalation of volatile; chemicals such as solvents; direct skin contact; chemical spills and splashes	• Provide open windows or mechanical air vents to ensure proper ventilation. • Wear appropriate personal protective equipment. • Access to stored chemicals should be restricted only to authorised staff. • Regular checking or inspection of chemical stores must be done to check for any deterioration or leakage of containers. • Ensure that every chemical is properly labelled and has a material safety data sheet. • Arrange for annual medical examinations for staff exposed to perchloroethylene (a toxic colourless volatile solvent used commonly as a dry-cleaning fluid).
Thermal Stress	Prolonged exposure to heat from the machinery or equipment used in hotel. This can cause headaches, fatigue and discomfort.	Staff working in the boiler rooms, laundry, kitchen or any other heated areas.	• Ensure a proper, functional and effective ventilation through a carefully designed exhaust and air conditioning system. • Avoid thick clothing • Lay down and follow an appropriate work-rest schedule for workers. • Drink plenty of water so as to replenish water lost through dehydration.
Cuts	Cuts may occur while using knives, cutters and machinery in kitchens, laundries and engineering laboratories and workshops	Machinery used in various departments, laundry machines and chemicals, use of knives	• Ensure that all safety interlocks and safety guards in every machinery are in place. • Do not try to reach into any equipment or machinery while it is in operation. • Do not clean blades of the machine, remove the safety guards for retrieval or clean the machine before the power has been shut down. • Scrupulously follow the operating instructions as recommended by the manufacturer or supplier. • Use a pusher or tool to avoid contact with moving parts of machinery. • Use knives with care.

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Burns and Scalds	Careless use of ovens and deep fryers can cause severe burns and scalds.	Use of ovens and deep fryers	• The work area should be so designed and organised as to prevent contact with flames and hot objects. • Use padded gloves for handling hot objects. • Avoid overfilling vessels with hot liquids like oil or boiling water. • Do not use a wet cloth to lift lids from hot pots. • Ensure that the handles of pots and pans are turned away instead of sticking out from the counter or stove. • Make use of safety devices like interlocking switches and thermostats in ovens. • Do not open cookers and steam ovens before the steam pressure is off. • Open hot water and hot liquid faucets slowly to avoid splashes.
Fire and Explosion	Explosion by fire	• Flammable substances. • High-pressure appliances • Fire or steam • Kitchens, laundries • Pressure vessels like steam boilers	• Ensure steam boilers are inspected at least once every 12 months by an authorised boiler inspector. • Ensure air or steam receivers are inspected at least once every 24 months by an authorised Boilers Inspector. • Ensure that the Boiler Attendants are properly trained and certified. • Provide workers working in the boiler rooms with hearing protectors.

Safe Work Procedures Required in the Work Area

Employers are encouraged to establish Safe Work Procedures (SWP) for the various types of work carried out in the hotel. Wherever possible, these procedures should be incorporated into the standard operating procedures for staff to follow. Safe work procedures should be effectively communicated to all the staff.

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Employers should establish a system to ensure that the existing safe work procedures are reviewed whenever a new equipment or processes are introduced or changes are made to the operating procedures. There are legal requirements for safe work procedures for a certain work. No work shall commence unless the safe work procedures have been established and implemented.

Some safety procedures are necessary:

1. while working on any machinery where the fencing has been removed for the purpose of any examination, lubrication or any other operation;
2. while working at a place which is at a height of 3 metres or more and there can be a fall from there or a place which is likely to cause drowning, poisoning, chemical burns or asphyxiation;
3. while working in any closed, confined space;
4. while doing any work involving heat or ignition, especially where any explosive or flammable substance is present;
5. while testing, maintenance or repair work on any pressure vessel, hydraulic or lifting equipment;
6. working on any vessel, machinery or plant or adopt a process that contains or is liable to produce or give off to any corrosive, toxic or flammable substance;
7. while working in compressed air environment or under water;
8. while spray painting; and
9. while dismantling of any pipe or equipment containing steam or substances that are toxic, flammable or corrosive.

Point to remember for safety

Some other points adopted for ensuring safety at workplace are:

1. Safety training
2. Group meetings
3. Accident, incident and disease investigation and analysis
4. In-house safety rules and regulations

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Activity

Visit any hotel's housekeeping department and discuss with the hotel staff about the various hazards which can occur at their workplace.

Material Required

Writing material, chart paper, etc.

Procedure

- Visit any hotel's housekeeping department.
- Discuss with the staff about various hazardous materials or chemicals being used by them and note it down.
- Observe the methods of handling the hazardous materials while working.
- Draw a chart depicting the preventive measures against hazards of working area and display in the class.
- After the visit, make a project report and present in the class.

Check Your Progress

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. _____can be controlled by elimination of the potential dangers from the workplace or by substituting them.
2. MSDS stands for _____ .
3. Use of _____ can avoid several workplace hazards.
4. _____ and diseases can result in suffering, sickness absenteeism, loss of productivity, disability or even death.

B. Answer in Brief

1. Describe the various important points which minimise hazards at the workplace with the help of an example.
2. Write the safety work procedures required at the workplace.
3. What are the points adopted for ensuring safety at the workplace?

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SESSION 2: STANDARD SAFETY PROCEDURES

Nobody wishes or likes to come across an emergency or disaster, especially one that affects their business, employees or them personally. Yet it is quite probable

that emergencies and disasters strike anyone, anytime, and anywhere. One may be forced to evacuate an organisation when least expected. The standard safety procedure is important because it means a set of written instructions that document a routine or emergency activity to be followed by a hotel or organisation. SOPs help in maintaining consistent service of high quality and standard in the hotel.

The development and use of SOPs are an integral system of an organisation as it equips workers with the information of ideal procedure to undertake a job properly thereby facilitating consistency in the quality of service and integrity of the hotel. All newly recruited hotel staff must be trained on hotel's SOPs. When some hazardous situations take place, the following evacuation procedures may be undertaken by the hotels.

Handling Emergency Situations in a Hotel

Handling emergency situations in a hotel or restaurant is a big task indeed. At some point of time, the front office staff may face an unusual situation, like a bomb threat, fire, theft, etc.

Bomb threat or terrorist attack

The staff must be trained and instructed to be alert always. In case of any doubt or suspicion, the supervisor or manager must be informed immediately. Some precautionary measures that can be followed are listed below:

1. Placing metal or bomb detectors in hotels to enhance security measures, providing guests and staff with a heightened sense of safety.
2. Banqueting suites and other non-public areas should be security checked and locked after use.
3. Goods received and bags should be checked and kept tidy.
4. Treat all bomb threats or warnings as credible until proven otherwise. Immediately contact to hotel authorities and inform them of the bomb threat. Provide as much detail as possible, including the nature of the threat, any specific locations mentioned, and any suspicious behaviour or items observed.

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5. The duties and responsibility of the staff during an emergency should be well-defined.
6. The hotel should work closely with the police to keep them updated.
7. Chamber maids and housekeeping supervisors should be trained to conduct security checks in guest rooms.

Hotel Evacuation Procedures

Evacuation from a hotel may become necessary in case of any fire, bomb threat or any other emergency situation. All departments should have an evacuation plan and prominently display directions of rescue or evacuation through notices, arrow signs, signages, etc. Some measures to be followed are discussed in following sections.

Front Office, Private Branch Exchange (PBX), Manager on Duty (MOD)

1. Notify the PBX operator, hotel security personnel, engineering and accounts department about the situation and reason for evacuating building.
2. Give house count to the operator.
3. Hit hot keys on the master computer or server to initiate high speed printing of emergency backup reports.
4. Recall all elevators to the ground floor.
5. Activate all alert and evacuation alarms.
6. Make evacuation announcement on the hotel public address system.
7. Release emergency key (E-key) from safe custody or vault to hotel security or fire or police chief present on site.
8. Lock all the safes, vaults and cash drawers. Do not take money or valuables with you.
9. Identify the rooms occupied by disabled or elderly guests. Send hotel personnel to assist them in evacuating, or wait for assistance from the fire department.
10. Send a few personnel to each hotel floor to direct and assist guests and staff to emergency exits.
11. Attend to ringing telephones from guestrooms only, and do it only if time permits.

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12. Close the gas pipeline going into gas fireplaces in rooms (if applicable).
13. Move all luggage carts away from the lobby exits. Place them against the walls.
14. Move all vehicles away from entrances and sides of the building.
15. The front office staff must keep detailed records of the incident, including the number of in-house guests, timeline of events, actions taken, and any communication with emergency responders. This information may be useful for post-incident analysis and improvement of emergency response procedures.

Housekeeping or laundry

1. Room attendants should place housekeeping carts in the closet or guestrooms and not in the hallway.
2. Turn off all the laundry equipment. Close gas pipelines leading to the laundry.
3. Check all storage rooms in the basement, lock them and the laundry.
4. Carry out all the blankets, sheets and bathrobes for evacuating guests.

Food and beverage

1. Turn off all the stoves, ovens and other cooking gadgets and implements.
2. Turn off the main gas valve to the kitchen. Check all the cooler rooms, pantry and walk-ins for staff or kitchen personnel.
3. Secure all the money if time permits.
4. Direct the guests present in the restaurant or lounge or banquet to emergency exits.
5. Check restaurant, lobby, restrooms and other places for guests and employees.
6. Exit the building.
7. Report to the concerned authorities.

Purchasing, shipping and receiving

1. Check all storerooms, cooler or deep freeze rooms and walk-ins for personnel. Lock these after checking.
2. Exit the building.
3. Report to the marshalling point or concerned authority.

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Human resources department

1. Lock all the files and papers.
2. Check all the offices and bathrooms for guests and personnel.
3. Take the room reservation book, or print a copy of the reservation list.
4. Evacuate the building with the book/list. Report to the concerned authority.

Sales, marketing and catering

1. Check all the offices, corridors and bathrooms for guests and personnel.
2. Take the room reservation book, or print a copy of the reservation list.
3. Evacuate the building with the book or list. Report to the concerned authority.

Accounting department

1. Lock all the negotiable assets in the hotel safe and vault room.
2. Activate emergency back-up evacuation procedures for hotel computer inventory systems.
3. Print hotel house ledger, city ledger, advance deposit record and trial balance.
4. Take reports to the concerned authority.
5. Check all offices and restrooms for any personnel. Exit hotel, report to the concerned.

Security

1. Collect all the available master guestroom keys from the key distribution centre.
2. Lock the security office and key distribution centre.
3. Take out the attendance register and on-duty employee list.
4. Hand over the above to the marshalling point outside the hotel for the human resources personnel to take roll call of employees and check for anyone missing.
5. Give the master keys and E-key to the police or fire command post for use by emergency personnel.

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Engineering

1. Turn off all Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems of the hotel.
2. Turn on the fire pump and sprinkler generator.
3. Take hotel blueprints/schematics, if time permits.
4. Check all mechanical and storage rooms for the personnel. Lock them down.
5. Assist in evacuating guests. Exit the building, report to the chief engineer or engineer on duty and police or fire fighting personnel.

Knowledge of Storage Area

Storage area is a place where the materials are kept. It is the place where all the operations of handling and storing various materials are done, such as stocking carry bags or packing materials, lifting of materials manually and staking the materials to be used in different departments. Safety and precautions must be taken in such an area to avoid injuries to the staff and also to prevent damage to the material.

Applying general principles of proper work practices which can aid in reducing the workplace accidents training and education is necessary. The hotel staff should understand the practices of storing the material in proper way so that it can minimise all the dangers. Hotel staff must know the potential hazards before moving, handling and storing materials. He/she should take the help of checklist so that he can inspect and ascertain that the material is stored in a proper way.

Table 4.2: Checklist for storage area

	Meets standard Doesn't meet standard	√ ×	Comments
Aisles	Clean		
	Clear		
	Well-marked		
Exits and Entrances	Clear		
	Well-marked		
	Free of ice, snow, water and other obstructions		

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Hand and Portable Tools	Properly stored when in use/ not in use		
	Fire fighting equipment		
	Clearly marked		
	Accessible		
Floors	Clean		
	Clear		
	In good condition		
	Well-drained		
Ladders	In good condition		
	Free of gas/ oil		
	Secure when in use/ not in use		
Lighting	Adequate		
	Clean		
Machines	Clean		
Roadways, Parking Areas	In good repair		
	Well-marked		
	Clear of ice, snow		
Signs, tags	Adequate		
	Appropriate		
	Clean		
Stacking and Storage	Aisles clear		
	Stacks stable and secure		
	Well labelled		
	Area clean and clear		
Stairs	Non-slip tread		
	Clean		
	Clear		
	In good condition		
Ventilation Systems	Clean		
	Clear		
Waste Disposal	Adequate number of bins		
	Separate and approved containers for oily rags, flammable scrap, etc.		

Initials of person doing walk-through: _____ Date: _____

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Material handling and storage

NOTES

In cases of emergency, it may be necessary to move the furniture, equipment and various tools to a safe place to avoid them from blocking the public passage or being hurled around and injuring people. If it is necessary to handle materials and/or equipment manually during an emergency, the employee should be coached about how to prevent a strain or sprain injury to himself/herself while doing so. Employees should be encouraged to lift only as much weight as they are comfortable with. If the weight of an object seems excessive, assistance should be obtained. Do not lift, push, pull or carry heavy objects unless not absolutely necessary. If doing so is necessary, one should make use of housekeeping carts, mop buckets with wheels, removable ramps, water pick up machines, and portable vacuum packs, which would make the task easier and less hazardous.

Following are some guidelines for material storage:

1. Supplies must be stored in assigned areas and stacked so as not to create a falling object hazard.
2. Aisles in storage areas must be kept clear and passable.
3. Material must not be stored in designated walkways or placed so as to obstruct the access to exits.
4. Fire extinguishers, emergency showers, electrical panels and equipment must be installed at a proper height so as not to hinder the movement of people.
5. Combustible and flammable materials (for example, paints, compressed gasses and solvents) must not be stored near hot surfaces or electrical equipment.
6. Incompatible chemicals (for example, oxidisers and flammables, acids and bases) must be separated.
7. Flammable liquids must be stored in original containers or flammable liquid safety cans. When not in use, the following must be taken care of:
   (a) Keep the lids on containers.
   (b) Containers must be stored in a flammable liquid storage cabinet.

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8. Compressed gas cylinders must be stored in the upright position with valve caps in place and secured in place with a chain.
9. Acids and chemicals must be stored safely and as per precautions laid down for them.

Some important steps to be followed for proper cleaning chemical and storage safety are discussed in the sections below.

Safe Lifting Technique

As a part of the goal of accident prevention, we want to provide education to everyone on safe lifting techniques in order to prevent back injuries.

Quick lifting tips

1. Before lifting, make sure your path is dry and clear of objects that could cause a fall.
2. Bend your knees and keep your back straight. (Lift with your legs, not your back.)
3. Bring the load close to your body.
4. Lift in a slow, even motion.
5. Don't twist your body as far as possible. If you must turn, move your feet along with the waist or torso.
6. Keep your back straight when putting down the load.

The risk of sustaining injury is largely related to the weight of the object you lift, although weight is not the only thing that determines the risk of injury. Hence, you need to be especially careful when lifting heavy items; such as storage boxes, heap of files, documents or papers.

Other Guidelines

For preventing hazards and ensuring a safe workplace, a few other safeguards must also be followed which are discussed below.

Keep the load close

Holding a 20 pounds object 20 inches from the body creates more compressive force on your lower back than holding it 10 inches away. This is because the muscles in your back have to work harder to counterbalance

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the weight when it is farther from the body. The risk of damage to the spine, muscle strains and ligament sprains increases with increase in the compressive force on your lower back.

Avoid lifting objects straight up from the floor

Lifting from the floor can greatly increase the risk of injury for two reasons. Firstly, it is difficult to bring objects close to your body when picking them up from the floor, especially large objects where your knees can get in the way. Secondly, your lower back must now support the weight of your upper body as you lean forward, in addition to supporting the weight of the item you are lifting. Lifting the same 20 pounds from the floor takes more than double the amount of force on your lower back when compared with lifting it from waist height. Even a one-pound object lifted from the floor increases your risk of injury if you use a bent over posture.



Fig. 4.1: Incorrect and correct postures to lift objects from the floor

Plan ahead

Plan and decide in advance how you will lift, carry and place the item before picking it up. First estimate the weight of the load by moving or tipping it. Figure out if the single heavy load can be distributed into several smaller loads.

Get help when you need it

Do not try to lift heavy or awkward loads on your own. Even though the muscles in your upper body may be strong enough to handle the load, it may not be advisable to force them to bear and withstand the additional load and strain. Request a co-worker to help, and whenever possible, use a mechanical device like trolley, cart, hand truck etc., to move the load.

Storage of Acids and Chemicals

The chemicals should be stored properly in the storage area. Many of the chemicals are require cool and dry place for their storage or as per the company instructions. There should be a separate area for keeping the hazardous chemicals for a safety purpose.

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There should be proper ventilation in the area where the chemicals are kept and control the toxic fumes and these should be kept in a locked room with controlled manner and must not be easily accessible for anyone. Make sure when using the toxic fumes chemicals; one should use PPE (personal protective equipment) so that inhaling or spilling chemicals on our body can be avoided. He also protests our body from severe injuries.

Labelling and Warning Signs Used for Chemical Storage

Chemical products that are hazardous to health or environment must be labelled with a warning sign and warning text. Information about how to protect oneself and handle the product in a safe way must also be stated. Employers should ensure that their employees know the hazards of the chemical products they use at work. Employers may also use placard, notices and signboards use at their workplaces. Labelling each container containing hazardous substance; such as bleach solution and caustic cleaner, is the most direct means of hazard communication. If it is not possible to display full information on the container, the identity of the chemical and the hazard group(s) and symbol(s) should at least be displayed. Other required information can be given in a readily available information sheet or brochure provided with the chemical.

Statutory requirements for labeling of dangerous substances are prescribed in the factories and industrial undertakings. The label should include the following information:

1. Identity of the substance: chemical name(s) and/ or common name(s)
2. Hazard classification and symbol(s)
3. An indication of the particular risks inherent in the substance
4. An indication of the required safety precautions

Handling Furniture

Safe handling and moving of furniture begins with the basic understanding of how a piece is constructed.

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The points given should be kept in mind while handling, lifting and moving the furniture.

1. Before picking up a piece of furniture, determine how it is put together and if any of its parts are removable or detachable.
2. Make sure where the furniture is its strongest—generally along a major horizontal element, and try to carry it from these points.
3. Examine the room and the route where the furniture is to be moved. Look around to make sure you know where everything is placed.
4. Identify potential trouble. Light fixtures that hang low or protrude out from the wall may get damaged or cause damage.
5. Glass tabletops can also be easily damaged if bumped.
6. If possible, keep the ways clear of fragile or obstructive items.
7. Protect the furniture to be moved with soft padding or wrap it in a blanket or thick fabric. Protective padding is especially important if an item is going into storage.
8. Before moving an item, make sure you know exactly where it has to go.
9. Ensure that the temperature and relative humidity at the new location is the same as the place where the furniture was previously kept, since extreme changes in temperature and humidity can cause splitting of joints and veneers.
10. Never hurry when you are moving furniture since hurried handling is the main cause of scratches, dents, etc. Each item needs to be approached individually, without haste and with sufficient manpower present.
11. Make sure you have a firm grip on the piece with both hands. Do not wear cotton gloves. It is essential that hands do not slip from a piece of furniture while it is being moved.
12. Never slide or drag furniture along the floor. The vibration can loosen or break joints, chip feet, break legs along with damaging the carpeting or floor finish. Whenever possible, use trolleys or dollies for transporting heavy pieces.

Notes

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13. Handling valuable furnishing requires slow, gentle and careful movements.
14. Just as gymnasts work with 'spotters' to catch them when they misstep, have helpers on hand to guide the movers so they don't crash into walls or pieces of furniture.

Lifting Furniture

Ability to lift may be improved if you are appropriately trained in lifting techniques. Also, the ability to lift may get considerably reduced in an adverse working environment or if one suffers from ill health. The risk of injury increases as the weight of the load increases.

However, the risk arises not just from the weight of the object being handled but also the way it is handled, for example, by twisting, reaching or repeating the task frequently. The steps to lift a load safely are discussed in following sections:

Reaching

When a load is held away from the body, the stress on the lower back increases substantially. The maximum weight you can lift safely is reduced dramatically when load is handled farther away from the body. Similarly, long reaches or extension of the body increase the risk of lower back injury.

Plan the lift

Unfamiliar loads must be treated with caution. Gently rock the load to test the weight and its distribution. Consider the following points:

1. Adjust your body according to the load.
2. Prefer using handling aids like trolleys and carts.
3. Assess if a team or group lift may be required, and use accordingly.
4. Can the lift be done without much stooping or twisting movements?
5. Remove all obstructions or tripping hazards from the route of carrying the load.
6. Plan resting places if the load is to be moved a long distance.
7. Consider the use of protective equipment, e.g., gloves, boots.

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8. Keep your feet apart while lifting and moving the load since it gives a stable base to the body.
9. Avoid wearing tight restricting clothes or unsuitable footwear such as high heels.
10. Placing one leg forward to the other will help improve balance and control.
11. If a close approach to the load is not possible, try sliding it towards you before attempting to lift it.
12. Bend your knees (not your back).
13. Keep your back straight.
14. Keep your shoulders level and facing the same direction as your hips.
15. Grip the load with your palms, rather than just your fingers. Keep your arms close to your body to help support the load.

Handling Electrical Tools

Electricity can be dangerous if handled without caution and can cause shocks, fires, explosions or burns. Accidents involving electricity may cause minor injury or may result in serious disabling injuries or death. Electricity, therefore, can pose a serious workplace hazard.

Most injuries involving electricity can be prevented if old, damaged or unsafe equipment is removed from service or if safety of work areas and work practices are ensured. To minimise the risk of injury from electrical sources, it is necessary to ensure that all electrical wires and gadgets are properly insulated and grounded, that circuit protecting devices are installed and safe work practices are followed.

An electrically safe workplace can be achieved and verified by following the process as listed below:

1. Clean electrical appliances regularly to avoid build-up of dust and spilled or burnt foods (in case of kitchen appliances).
2. Never use detergents or spray insecticides for cleaning electrical appliances as these might cause cracking and result in an electrical hazard.
3. Never attempt to repair appliances by yourself. Instead, get it done by a competent, trusted electrician.

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4. Discard appliances that have been dipped in water and never use them again.
5. Also, discard any damaged extension cords.
6. Go through the electrical tool manufacturer manual so we can understand how to operate it correctly and safely.
7. Never touch electrical appliances when hands are wet and feet are bare.
8. Unplug the electrical equipments before performing housekeeping duties. Switch off the table lamp, mini fridge, and electric tea urn, air conditioner, bathroom hairdryer, geyser, etc.
9. Wear rubber or plastic soled shoes when using electrical appliances, especially if you're stepping on concrete floors or when outdoors.
10. Never use a faulty or old appliance as this may have a broken plug or frayed cord.
11. Turn off the power supply before unplugging appliances.
12. Never put metal plates or aluminium foil inside the microwave.
13. Always switch off and unplug the toaster before taking anything out.
14. Be extra careful when using electrical appliances attached to power supply points near wet areas like kitchen or bathroom sinks, tubs, swimming pools, etc.

Handling Floors

Following points have to be kept in mind while handling floor safely.

Choose slip-resistant flooring

Floors can be made of several materials like marble, rubber tiles, quarry, ceramic, porcelain, vinyl composition tile, terrazzo, concrete, granite, etc. Choice of flooring should not just be based on cost and aesthetics but also on the floor's slip resistance, the space and environment where it will be used. Most types of flooring have good slip resistance when dry, but when wet, they have fair to poor slip resistance unless they are treated or textured. Most flooring materials become extremely slippery when water is present plus a contaminant, like grease.

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Use slip-resistant treatments for existing flooring

If it is not feasible to replace your flooring with a more slip-resistant material, you can treat the floors to decrease the risk of slips and falls. However, any such treatment has to be re-applied from time to time since they lose their effectiveness over time. The options are:

(a) Abrasive floor coatings

These coatings include gritty substances, such as aluminium oxide or walnut shells to improve traction of otherwise smooth flooring.

(b) Chemical etching

This is an acid wash that is typically applied to natural stone floors, concrete and porcelain that makes the floor surface rougher.

(c) Carpeting

Covering your floor with carpet is another option to prevent slips and falls.

Clean floors properly

When cleaning floors, choice of material used as well as the method of use can significantly affect it is slip resistance (or lack thereof).

That is why it is important to have a floor-cleaning protocol that includes:

(a) identifying the appropriate cleaning tools (deck brushes, squeegees, etc.) and cleaning agents/ solvents (for example, some solvents remove rust and scale, others consume oil);

(b) ascertaining how often the floors must be cleaned; and

(c) thoroughly training all employees who clean floors.

While training, be sure to include the proper water temperature and whether the floors must be rinsed after cleaning with the solvent. For example, an alkaline solvent used in a greasy kitchen could actually make the floor more slippery if not rinsed off after cleaning, so proper training is important.

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Maintain good housekeeping

Excellent housekeeping results in clean and clutter-free floors, preventing slips, trips and falls. Here are the tips to improve housekeeping:

(a) Clean up all the spills promptly and use wet floor signs to ward off people.

(b) Keep wires, strings and cords out of the way of walkways or work areas as much as possible. You can tie cords together, use cord covers, or hang cords from the ceiling.

(c) Designate walking aisles in warehouses, manufacturing environments, etc. Develop a housekeeping programme for example, dedicate the last five minutes of each shift as clean-up time.

Do not wax and strip-scrub

There can be serious injuries to employees due to falling while waxing and stripping the floors. This can be avoided by using a floor scrubber, since floor scrubbers generally require only water to do a great cleaning job, and there is no need to wax and strip the floors. This will not only help keep your employees safe, it might be worth to spend for the time it saves. However, if the floors must be stripped and waxed, ensure that the workers wear non-slip footwear.

Maximise the benefit of floor mats

Floor mats at entrances allow people to shed off the rain, dust and other contaminants their shoes have gathered, which helps keep the rest of the floor dry. Here are a few tips for using mats effectively and prevent them from becoming a source of trips and falls:

(a) Provide mats that are long enough for people to adequately wipe contaminants off their shoes. Thus they can be longer in rainy season (about 10–12 walking steps) and can be shorter (6–8 steps) in dry weather.

(b) Select mats with bevelled edges and non-slip back lining.

(c) Do not overlap the edges of mats.

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(d) Don not leave gaps between mats.
(e) Avoid rolled up or up-turned corners and edges.
(f) Inspect mats for wear and tear from time to time and replace them when needed.

Slips and falls can not only be embarrassing but also lead to serious injuries. Doing what you can to make your floors more slip resistant is one way you can prevent them. Instructing your employees to wear slip-resistant shoes can also help.

Handling Sharp Tools (Knife, Blade or Needles)

Sharp, pointed objects or devices with sharp points and cutting edges capable of cutting or piercing the skin are called sharp tools. Examples may include needles, scalpel blades, broken glass, razor blades or other similar objects.

Sharp objects pose a risk of injury due to their ability to puncture or cut through the skin. Also, sometimes these tools may be contaminated with human blood or body fluids, microorganisms, chemicals, etc.

It is the responsibility of the department supervisor to ensure that the housekeeping staff working with sharp objects are appropriately trained and aware of the procedures for working safely with them. The procedure for safe handling of sharp tools are:

1. Wear proper safety gear like eyewear, gloves, etc.
2. Use the proper tool most suited for the job.
3. Inspect tools before use.
4. Keep work area clear of all clutter.
5. Keep the item to be cut securely on a hard flat surface. Do not hold work in hand while cutting.
6. Use a sharp blade since a dull blade would require more force, thereby increasing potential hazards.
7. Replace blades when they become dull.
8. Dispose off the used blades cautiously.
9. Stand in a well-balanced position while using a sharp tool.
10. Draw the blade towards yourself when cutting.
11. Make sure the path of the cut is clear, and keep the non-cutting hand out of the path of the cuting.
12. When cutting thick material, use several passes or strokes of the blade and apply more downward pressure with each pass.

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13. Never use a cutting blade as a screwdriver, chisel, etc.
14. Do not leave the exposed blades unattended. As far as possible, use self-retracting cutting blades.
15. When appropriate, use rounded tip cutting blades rather than pointed tip blades.
16. Maintain proper storage or use a separate drawer for sharp cutting tools.
17. Keep the cutting tools in a closed position or covered with a protective sheath.
18. Use a flat surface holding and protective wear while using such sharp tools.

Practical Exercises

Activity

Visit a hotel nearby. Collect information on the safety and security measures that are part of the SOP in the event of a fire or bomb threat.

Material Required

Writing material, chart paper, etc.

Procedure

- Visit any hotel nearby your area.
- Discuss with the hotel manager about the safety practices followed by them while dealing with fire and bomb threats.
- Note down all the information and observe handling procedures.
- Discuss the noted information in class.

Check Your Progress

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. E-key stands for _____.
2. HVAC stands for _____, _____ and _____ system.
3. _____ in storage areas must be kept clear and passable.
4. Chemicals are _____ substances.
5. _____ area is the place where all the operations of handling and storing various materials are done.

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B. Answer in Brief

1. Explain the evacuation procedure of front office and housekeeping department at the time of emergency.
2. Write short notes on the following:
   (a) Knowledge of storage area
   (b) Material handling
   (c) Importance of labelling and warning sign for chemical storage
   (d) Team lifting technique
   (e) Handling furniture

SESSION 3: USE OF FIRST-AID AND PPES

First-aid

The employers must take care of their own health and safety and ensure not to adversely affect the health and safety of other persons also, be it their employees or guests/customers. In order to do this, they must comply with safety instructions, policy and procedures related to health and safety at workplace, procedures for first-aid and for reporting injuries and illnesses as laid down by the concerned authorised agencies.

It is the duty of the employer to provide all facilities, trained personnel along with adequate and appropriate equipment in their organisation. They must also ensure that employees receive immediate attention if they sustain injury or are taken ill at work. These regulations apply to all the workplaces including those having less than five employees and also to the self-employed. To ensure that the first-aid requirements of staff can be met, sufficient first-aid material should be available at the workplace, along with the personnel trained to provide first-aid. Along with this, all employees must have information about first-aid arrangements, as well as the availability of a first-aid kit in the organisation or hotel.

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The nature of first-aid kit should be decided as per requirement in view of the type of activities or work being done in the hotel. There are three sizes of first-aid kit— small, medium, large.

The employer should make an assessment of first-aid needs, and choose the contents of the kit according to each workplace requirements. The low hazard environments include shops and offices, while high hazard environments include warehouses, factories and construction sites. In some circumstances, more than one first-aid kit may be required, such as when a workplace is located far away from emergency medical service, or when shift work or sites are large or have several separate buildings.

Record of first-aid treatment

Supervisors should maintain a record of all injuries in the following suggested format:

Injured worker information		
Name:		
Date:	Time:	
Department:	Position:	
Building:	Location:	
Description of Injuries (provide details of the injury: left or right side, area of body, injury type)		
Description of First-aid Provided (provide details of the first-aid kit and materials used)		

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Supervisor (or person providing first-aid)	
Name:	
Department:	Position:
Signature:	

First-aid kit material

Although, there is no fixed or mandatory list of items to be included in a first-aid kit, a suggested minimum stock of first-aid items in a low hazard workplace might be:

1. A leaflet/flyer on general first-aid
2. Medium sterile dressings and large sterile dressings
3. Assorted plasters relevant for the work area
4. Triangular bandage
5. Safety pins
6. Sterile eye pads
7. Disposable gloves

Other useful items to be included could be:

1. Saline cleansing wipes
2. Roll or adhesive tape
3. Sterile adhesive dressing
4. Resuscitation face shield with valve

First-aid documentation procedure

1. First-aid boxes are kept in the housekeeping manager's desk, control desk, and other areas as deemed necessary.
2. Call the emergency services and ensure the comfort of any injured person.
3. Notices are placed around the premises with respect to first-aid.
4. A record of first-aid should be kept in an appropriate form (Health and Safety file).
5. Hotel staff must not take it upon themselves to render first-aid and must seek the first-aiders or appointed persons.
6. Emergency telephone numbers have to be displayed on the first-aid notice board.

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Handling of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is designed to provide protection from serious injuries or illnesses resulting from contact with chemical, radiological, physical, electrical, mechanical or other hazards. Use of appropriate and adequate PPE protects individuals from chemical hazards affecting their eyes, ears, face, respiratory system, skin, hands, feet, head and body. No protective equipment and clothing alone can offer protection against all types of hazards. Thus PPE should be used along with other protective methods, including exposure control procedures and equipment.

To ensure maximum possible protection for employees at the workplace, the cooperative efforts of both employers and employees will help in establishing and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment. In general, hotel management is responsible for:

- Doing a hazard assessment of the workplace in order to identify physical and other health hazards.
- Identifying appropriate PPE for employees.
- Providing adequate number of PPE to its employees.
- Arrange for training of employees regarding the use and care of PPE.
- Maintaining the availability of appropriate and adequate PPE, including replacing worn out or damaged PPE.
- Periodically reviewing, updating and evaluating the requirement and effectiveness of the PPE.

In general, employees should:

- Wear PPE properly
- Attend training sessions on how to use PPE
- Care for, clean and maintain PPE
- Inform the supervisor about the need to repair or replace PPE

Putting on PPE

When putting on PPE, the given procedure should be followed:

1. Decontaminate hands with soap and water or sanitiser before putting on PPE since gloves provide an ideal, warm, moist environment where

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bacteria can thrive. Decontaminating hands will remove any transient bacteria on your hands.
2. Put on gloves.
3. Put on the apron.

Removing PPE

1. Gloves should be removed first.
2. Apron or gown can be removed next.
3. Mask or respirator, if worn, should be taken off next.
4. Hands must be decontaminated after the removal of PPE.

Use of PPE for specific task

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in hotels is essential for ensuring the safety and well-being of both guests and staff, particularly in environments where potential hazards may be present. PPE is commonly used in hotels in the areas of:

1. Housekeeping staff often use PPE such as gloves and aprons when cleaning guest rooms and handling potentially hazardous materials such as cleaning chemicals or soiled linens. Additionally, they may use goggles or face shields when using sprays or other substances that could splash into their eyes.
2. Maintenance and engineering staff may use PPE such as gloves, safety glasses, and steel-toed boots when performing maintenance or repairs on equipment, electrical systems, or plumbing fixtures. Depending on the task, they may also require specialised PPE such as hard hats or ear protection.
3. In hotel restaurants and kitchens, food and beverage staff may use PPE such as hair nets or caps, gloves, and aprons to maintain hygiene and prevent cross-contamination while handling food. Additionally, chefs and kitchen staff may use heat-resistant gloves or mitts when working with hot surfaces or equipment.
4. While front desk and concierge staff may not typically require PPE for routine tasks, they may use face masks or shields and gloves when interacting with guests during health emergencies or when handling packages or luggage.

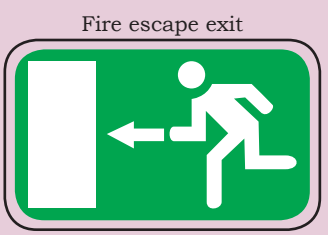
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5. Security staff may use PPE such as gloves, safety vests, and protective eyewear when performing duties that require physical intervention or handling potentially dangerous situations.
6. Hotels may also provide PPE for guests, particularly during health emergencies or in areas where hazards may be present. This can include face masks, hand sanitiser, and gloves, which may be available upon request or provided in guest rooms.

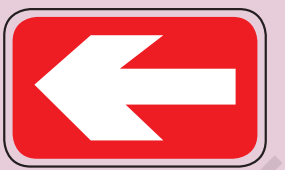
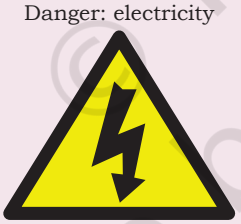
Safety Signs and Symbols at Workplace

Some commonly used safety signs are given in the table below:

Table 4.3: Common safety signs

Type of Sign	Meaning
Mandatory signs	These signs instruct you to take action (e.g. 'Eye protection must be worn'). Mandatory signs are blue and require specific behaviour. e.g.: wear personal protective equipment. **Examples** 
Emergency exit or escape route signs	These signs give information on escape routes, emergency exits, first-aid or rescue facilities (e.g., 'Emergency exit/escape route'). Green signs are for emergency escapes, such as doors, exits or escape routes, or they are signs to indicate first-aid equipment and facilities. **Example** 

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Prohibitory signs	These signs are coloured red and forbid behaviour likely to increase or cause danger (e.g., 'No smoking'). They indicate dangerous behaviour, stop or shut-down; or can signify a danger alarm or an emergency cut-out device. **Examples** No Smoking  No Smoking or naked flames  Not drinking water 
Firefighting signs	These signs provide information about the location and type of fire-fighting equipment available. **Examples** This way to firefighting equipment  Fire Extinguisher 
Warning signs	These signs give warning of a hazard or danger (e.g. 'Danger—electricity'). Warning signs are yellow or amber and mean 'be careful', 'take precautions', etc. **Examples** Danger: electricity  Flammable  Attention! 

Practical Exercises

Activity

Make a chart of safety signs used in a hotel.

Material Required

Writing material

Procedure

- Visit any hotel near your area.
- Discuss with the hotel manager about safety practices followed by them and ask queries.

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- Note down all the information about the display of safety signs and also collect their pictures.
- Display the signs in the class. Make a report and present in the class.

Check Your Progress

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. _____signs are coloured red and forbid behaviour likely to increase or cause danger.
2. _____signs give warning of a hazard or danger.
3. _____ signs provide information about the location and type of fire-fighting equipment available.
4. _____ signs are blue and require specific behaviour.
5. _____ signs give information on escape routes, emergency exits, first-aid or rescue facilities.

B. Answer in Brief

1. Write a short note on first-aid.
2. What are the points to be considered while handling personal protective equipment?
3. Write the types of safety signs and their meaning.

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SESSION 4: SAFETY MEASURES FOR WORKPLACE INSPECTION

Workplace Inspection

Regular inspections help in establishing and maintaining safe conditions and discovering unsafe practices at the workplace. Regular, systematic inspections help identify unsafe equipment, conditions, processes and work practices and take timely corrective measures. If unsafe conditions and practices are found to exist, prompt corrective actions must be initiated. This would go a long way to prevent accidents from occurring and to safeguard employees.

The employees also get an opportunity to point out deficiencies in their area during inspection that may otherwise go unnoticed, and therefore uncorrected.

Safety inspections are conducted not primarily to ascertain how many things are wrong, but rather, to make sure that all things are satisfactory. The secondary purpose of inspection is to identify conditions which, if corrected, can upgrade the facility so as to meet the accepted and approved standards and/or regulations. As a consequence, the inspected facilities are safer and more healthy places to work. Following people are generally responsible for the inspection:

1. First-line supervisors: Individual employees, maintenance employees, as well as inspection teams, all functions as workplace inspectors. The first-line supervisor is one of the most important inspectors in the entire organisation.

2. The supervisor: He/she is the key person because he or she is in constant contact with employees and is thoroughly familiar with all the safety risks that might develop in the department. Supervisors should be on the alert at all times to discover and correct unsafe conditions and practices.

3. Employees: If they are alert, employees can also be of great value in preventing accidents. Employees should be encouraged to inspect the workplace every day and to report any hazardous conditions their supervisor. Employees who are safety conscious will look continuously for conditions that may cause injury to themselves or others.

4. Maintenance employees: These, in particular, should be safety conscious. When maintenance employees are working in various departments and observe safety risks that should be corrected, they can avert hazards by reporting risks to the supervisor of the department. Management should alert its employees that maintenance people are a great help in locating and correcting hazardous conditions.

Inspection Teams

Safety inspection teams bring a fresh perspective to the workplace and usually catch details overlooked by people who are a part of the same. It is essential, however, for

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inspection teams to understand that their job really is a helpful and constructive one. Many unsafe and unhealthy conditions sometimes have been existing and are hardly noticeable. Ideally, a safety professional should be on the inspection team to spearhead the inspection. This person has a key role during safety inspections because he or she is responsible for coordinating the inspection. Safety professionals should know thoroughly all safety and health rules and policies. The fire protection requirements that are applicable should also be known. Mostly the laws and regulations lay down minimum requirements only. It may be necessary to exceed those requirements to comply with organisational policy and perhaps even to secure maximum safety.

A fire protection representative and an industrial hygienist are others who should be a part of the inspection team. Volunteers can also be there to suggest measures for accident prevention and safeguards that can make the workplace safer and healthier for all employees.

Workplace inspections help prevent injuries, illnesses and workplace accidents. The inspection team conducts a thorough critical examination of the workplace, identifies and records potential hazards and suggests corrective action. Occupational health and safety committees can also help plan, conduct, report and monitor inspections. Regular workplace inspections are an important part of the overall occupational health and safety programme.

Purpose of Workplace Inspection

As an essential part of a health and safety programme, all workplaces should be routinely and regularly inspected. Inspections are important as they allow the organisation head to:

1. know the concerns of workers and supervisors;
2. gain further understanding of jobs and tasks;
3. identify existing and potential hazards;
4. determine the underlying causes of hazards;
5. implement the recommended corrective action(s); and
6. monitor hazard control measures (personal protective equipment, engineering controls, policies procedures).

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Hazards at a Workplace

This includes the following:

1. Physical hazards which may be caused by heat, cold, noise, vibration, electric energy, weather conditions, radiation and pressure.
2. Chemical hazards potentially caused by a solid, liquid, gas, vapour, dust, fume or mist.
3. Biological hazards caused by organisms, such as bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites.
4. Machine equipment safety hazards like unsafe work practices, inadequate machine guards, unsafe workplace conditions, etc.
5. Ergonomic hazards caused by physiological, anatomical, and/or psychological stress on the worker, such as extreme temperature, repetitive and forceful movements, vibration, and/or awkward twisting postures due to improper work methods and improperly designed workstations, tools and equipment.

How are Inspections Done?

Thoroughly plan the inspection in advance. Ascertain where the inspection is to be done, what is the purpose of inspecting and how it will be undertaken. For inspecting noisy areas, enter the space in a group to avoid the need for arm waving, shouting and other undesirable methods of communication.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be worn where required. In case PPE is not available, do not enter such an area. Record this as a deficiency in your inspection report. Inspect the area when PPE is made available.

Observation

Look for deviations from the laid down or accepted work practices. To record such observations, use statements like 'a worker was seen operating or working on a machine without a protective guard.' However, the employer should not misuse such information derived from inspections for disciplinary measures.

Some common poor work practices include the following:

(a) Using machinery or tools without proper precautions

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(b) Operating equipment or machinery at unsafe speed or in violation of safe work practice
(c) Working without proper safety guards or other safety devices or using them inappropriately, rendering them ineffective
(d) Using defective tools or equipment or using them in an unsafe manner
(e) Using hands or fingers instead of tools or push sticks
(f) Overloading or crowding carts, trolleys, etc., or failing to balance materials on them
(g) Handling or lifting heavy loads improperly and unsafely
(h) Repairing or adjusting equipment while it is in operation, under pressure or electrically charged
(i) Failing to use or improperly use personal protective equipment or safety devices
(j) Creating unsafe, insanitary or unhealthy conditions due to inadequate personal hygiene by using compressed air for cleaning clothes, poor housekeeping, or by smoking in unauthorised areas
(k) Standing or working under suspended loads, scaffolds, shafts or open hatches

Inspection Principles

A few basic principles to be followed while conducting inspections are as follows:

(a) Attention of concerned authority must be drawn immediately to any imminent danger and not wait to include it in the final report.
(b) Give instructions to shut down and lock out any hazardous items or machines till they are repaired and restored to a safe operating standard.
(c) Do not operate an equipment by yourself. Instead, request the operator for a demonstration. If the operator or handler of any equipment does not exhibit knowledge of the imminent dangers, this is a cause for concern and must be included in the inspection report.

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Do not ignore any item even if you do not have knowledge to make an accurate judgment of safety. Ask for the operating manual or safety instructions by the manufacturer and learn about the safety standards of the particular machine.

(d) As far as possible, look up, down, around and inside of every equipment or machine. Be methodical and thorough in your observation. Do not conduct the inspection with a hurried or casual approach.

(e) Make a note of each hazard and its exact location in your notebook, lest some important issue is forgotten while writing the report. If possible, an on-the-spot recording of all findings may also be done. In case the inspection gets interrupted, make a note of what has or has not been examined.

(f) Ask questions, but do not unnecessarily disrupt work since this may also create a potentially hazardous situation.

(g) Check the static (stop position) and dynamic (in motion) conditions of the machine or equipment you are inspecting. If a machine is shut down, consider postponing the inspection until it is functioning again.

(h) Discuss as a group what corrections or controls are appropriate for the equipment, the process or the environment.

(i) It may not be prudent to try to detect all hazards simply by relying on your senses or by looking at them during the inspection. You may have to measure the levels of exposure to chemicals, noise, radiation or biological agents.

(j) Take a photograph if you are unable to clearly describe or sketch a particular situation.

Checklist for inspection

1. Basic layout plans showing equipment and materials used
2. Process flow

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3. Information on chemicals
4. Storage areas
5. Total work force, roster and shifts
6. Rules and regulations set down for the particular workplace by the employer or concerned authority
7. Job procedures required and safe work practices adopted
8. Manufacturer's specifications and operating instructions for equipment
9. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)—type needed, availability (quality and quantity), etc.
10. Emergency procedures laid down: fire, first-aid and rescue
11. Accidents occurred and their investigation and reports on the action taken
12. Worker reports regarding particular hazards at the workplace
13. Recommendations of the health and safety committee
14. Report of previous inspections
15. Maintenance reports, procedures and schedules
16. Other external audits (insurance, corporate specialist)
17. Monitoring reports (levels of chemicals, physical or biological hazards)
18. Reports of unusual operating conditions
19. Names of inspection team members and any technical experts assisting

Safety procedure or safety standards

Safety standards help hotels identify, prepare for, minimise and respond to hazards like fire along with health, safety and security risks that could adversely impact its guests and business. Where local regulations are more stringent than the hotel's safety standards, the local regulations shall apply. However, where the hotel's safety norms are more stringent, they shall apply, unless local regulations specifically prohibit the implementation of hotel's own standards.

Ensuring zero accident at workplace

As far as possible, every workplace including a hotel must have a 'zero accident' policy, which would mean

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that nobody should be injured there due to an accident. The underlying thought behind this policy is that all accidents can be prevented. When there is zero tolerance to accidents, it provides a basis for learning from the smallest accident and improving processes accordingly. Every hotel's ultimate goal should be zero accidents. Maintaining zero accidents, no doubt is not easy, but the following steps can help you achieve this critical objective:

1. ***Ensure that everyone in the hotel is committed to safety:*** Everyone in an organisation from the top management to the newest employee must be committed to safety and hold it as number one priority.

2. ***Set clear standards for workplace safety:*** Make sure that employees are aware of the rules and understand them and that the supervisors enforce them stringently.

3. ***Lead by example:*** Explain to supervisors and managers the importance of setting a good example and following all safety rules themselves—for example, wearing proper PPE and taking the same precautions as workers. Furthermore, supervisors should lead in identifying potential hazards and immediately correcting them.

4. ***Involve the employees in the process:*** Assign responsibility to workers also for keeping vigil on potential hazard points, reporting immediately to authorities, planning and conducting periodical inspection themselves, and for designing safety checklists and measures.

5. ***Promote understanding:*** Understanding the 'why' of safety can be a strong motivator. Emphasise that hazards will put employees' personal health and safety at risk.

6. ***Train employees for safety:*** Train employees well and frequently on various safety standards and

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processes thereof. Ensure that they are well informed and skilled to prevent accidents.

7. ***Encourage feedback:*** Welcome input from workers. Praise the workers who identify and correct hazards, or who report problems they cannot fix.

8. ***Learn from experience:*** When hazards are identified, do more than just correcting them. Use them as learning experiences to help workers become more alert and more sensitive to potential danger on the job.

9. ***Take swift and adequate action to correct safety problems:*** Make sure you respond promptly to identified hazards and take immediate steps to correct them.

10. ***View accident prevention as an ongoing challenge:*** It is something that you, supervisors and employees have to focus on every day, always improving, always setting new safety objectives, and always making steady progress towards achieving them.

Practical Exercises

Activity

Visit any hotel in your vicinity, and find out about the location(s) of the first-aid box, fire extinguisher, fire exits and alarms.

Material Required

Writing material

Procedure

- Visit any hotel nearby your area.
- Discuss with the hotel manager about locations where the first-aid boxes are kept.
- Also find out about the fire extinguishers, their placement and expiry dates.
- Ask about the location of fire exits and alarms.
- Note down all the information.
- Discuss in class.

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Check Your Progress

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. _____ help in establishing and maintaining safe conditions and discovering unsafe practices at the workplace.
2. The _____ is one of the most important inspectors in the entire organisation.
3. _____ is a person who plays a key role during safety inspections.
4. _____ inspections are an important part of the overall occupational health and safety programme.
5. _____ at a workplace are caused by noise, vibration, energy, weather, heat, cold, electricity, radiation and pressure.

B. Answer in Brief

1. Describe safety measures for workplace inspection.
2. How will you ensure 'zero accident' at workplace?

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Unit 5

Learn a Foreign or Local Language(s) Including English

French language is spoken by about 300 million people in the world. It is the third most spoken language in Europe, after German and English, and is also spoken in several other countries.

French was widely used as a diplomatic language from the 17th century until the middle of the 20th century, when English replaced it. It is still used by many international organisations, such as North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU) institutions, and the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Seven Cs of Communication

Clarity

In tourism and hospitality, clarity is crucial for conveying information to guests and customers. Clear communication ensures that guests understand the services offered, pricing, booking procedures, and any policies or regulations. For example, clear signage, brochures, and website content help guests navigate a hotel or tourist destination effectively.

Conciseness

In an industry where time is often limited and guests may be seeking quick information, concise communication

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is key. Whether it's a hotel reservation confirmation email or a tour itinerary, keeping messages brief and to the point helps guests digest information quickly and efficiently.

Concreteness

Providing concrete details about services, amenities, and attractions enhances the guest experience. Concrete communication might include specific descriptions of room features, restaurant menus with detailed dish descriptions, or guided tour itineraries with precise times and locations.

Coherence

Coherent communication ensures that all messages are logical, consistent, and easy to follow. For instance, a hotel's marketing materials should align with the actual guest experience, and staff should provide consistent information about services and amenities.

Correctness

Accuracy is paramount in the tourism and hospitality sector to build trust with guests. Incorrect information about booking availability, pricing, or attraction details can lead to guest dissatisfaction and negative reviews. Staff training and quality control measures help ensure that information provided to guests is correct and up-to-date.

Courtesy

Hospitality is all about making guests feel welcome and valued, and courteous communication plays a crucial role in achieving this. From warm greetings upon arrival to polite responses to guest inquiries, every interaction should be characterised by courtesy and professionalism.

Completeness

Complete communication ensures that guests have all the information they need to make informed decisions and have a positive experience. This includes providing comprehensive answers to guest questions, offering

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additional assistance or recommendations, and following up to ensure guest satisfaction.

FRENCH AND TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

The tourism and hospitality industry is expanding its horizon everyday. Travel and tourism is a service industry that requires well-trained professionals for handling clients and without proper communication, it is difficult to understand their needs. Along with functional communication, the rudimentary knowledge of French language will enable the staff to handle customers who speak and understand this language. This Unit discusses the knowledge, skills and experience to work in the tourism and hospitality sector where French is an asset.

SESSION 1: IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

In the age of globalisation, there are tremendous job openings and opportunities for skilled professionals both in the country, and internationally.

English is the most common spoken language in the hospitality industry. As it is, most people choose English as an additional language apart from their mother tongue. It is understood by most people that it helps to improve marketability. Those who are working in the hospitality industry have to deal with guests who speak different languages and have a different accent. A customer service executive is mostly the first and also the last hotel representative to interact with the guest, which is, while receiving, welcoming and seeing off the guest. As such, knowing more than one language is almost a must for this official.

Role of English in the Hospitality Industry

The role of English is not only applicable to the hospitality industry but also to the jobs in airlines, event management companies, food service operation providers, etc. English language is important when a person is working at a place where there are guests from a multi-cultural background.

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The role of English is also integral in view of the rapidly changing information and communication technology. The effectiveness of communication provides a broad spectrum to deal with guests and achieve customer satisfaction by fulfilling their expectations.

Scope and Importance of English in the Hospitality Industry

There are many avenues in India for learning English. It is also taught at the school level. In the hospitality industry, knowledge of English is associated with soft skills, voice, accents, pronunciation and vocabulary. A person working in the hospitality industry must also have a flair of writing in English. It comes in handy when writing or responding to letters, e-mails, answering queries and asking for supply orders. The hotel staff also has to communicate with the bank, insurance company and other agencies.

Development of short communication sentences

People working in the hospitality or food service industry or food service outlets, should be able to speak clearly and understand what the guests are saying and ordering.

They should know how to construct clear and concise sentences. This can be developed by thinking, organising words, drafting and writing small sentences. Exercise and practice help to develop and implement these skills. The ability to construct small sentences goes a long way in achieving customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry.

For learning and improving English speaking skills, the knowledge of grammar, tenses, active and passive voice sentences is highly required. It will be better if one uses English language skills whenever possible and required. It is always better to memorise difficult words, idioms and phrases to strengthen English.

Listening to English lectures, small learning videos and documentary films will undoubtedly and undeniably enhance the communication skills.

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Communication with various people

Effective communication with various stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality sector is essential for delivering exceptional guest experiences, fostering employee engagement, nurturing partnerships, and promoting responsible tourism practices. Clear, timely, and respectful communication builds trust, enhances relationships, and contributes to the overall success and sustainability of businesses in this industry. Primarily, communication in the tourism and hospitality sector cut across among the following stakeholders:

Guest Communication

Effective communication starts before guests even arrive. This includes providing clear booking confirmations, pre-arrival emails detailing amenities and services, and any necessary travel information. Hospitality staff should maintain open communication with guests throughout their stay. This involves greeting guests warmly, being attentive to their needs, and providing relevant information about the facilities, services, and local attractions. Soliciting feedback from guests through surveys or personal interactions is essential for continuous improvement. Hotels and tourism businesses can use this feedback to address any issues promptly and enhance the overall guest experience.

Employee Communication

Effective communication within the organisation is vital for ensuring that employees understand their roles, responsibilities, and the company's mission. Regular training sessions and clear communication channels help maintain consistency in service quality. Clear channels of communication between different departments and hierarchical levels ensure smooth operations. Regular staff meetings, memos, and digital communication platforms facilitate the exchange of information and foster teamwork. Recognising employees for their efforts and providing constructive feedback are essential for employee morale and motivation. Open communication encourages staff to share their ideas for improvement and contributes to a positive work environment.

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Supplier and Partner Communication

Clear and transparent communication with suppliers and partners is crucial for negotiating contracts and agreements. This includes discussing pricing, terms, and expectations to ensure a mutually beneficial relationship. Collaborating with suppliers and partners on marketing campaigns, promotions, and events requires effective communication. Regular meetings and updates help align strategies and maximise outcomes. When issues arise with suppliers or partners, prompt and respectful communication is necessary to address concerns and find solutions. Maintaining positive relationships even during challenging times is key to long-term partnerships.

Community and Local Authorities

Tourism businesses should engage with the local community to build positive relationships and support sustainable tourism practices. Clear communication about the business's impact, involvement in community initiatives, and listening to community concerns fosters goodwill.

Compliance with local regulations and permits is essential for operating legally and ethically. Effective communication with local authorities ensures that businesses understand and adhere to relevant laws and regulations, avoiding potential conflicts or penalties.

Upward communication

Whenever we are in a situation to have upward communication, we should always keep in mind receiver may have more knowledge of communication than the sender. Upward communication may be performed in many forms, such as ideas, suggestions, complaints, grievances, grapevines and rumors, etc. This can be possible directly face-to-face, in meeting and conferences, queries and others.

Upward communication becomes very effective if you are cautious and have good knowledge of words, vocabulary, sentence formation and other English language tactics with enthusiasm.

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Effective writing

Whenever we communicate with seniors and subordinates, writing is one of the prime skills required. In writing, each sentence explains your imagination, explanation and your relations with another person. He or she may be your subordinate or superior. While writing, ensure that every sentence should be closely connected with the main topic.

If we read what a person has written but cannot understand properly, then the whole writing is futile. It will be called a total case of miscommunication and may create confusion and sometimes official disturbances. Professional writing is an extension of your responsibilities.

Role of foreign language in the hospitality industry

English is also considered a foreign language in many countries. In the hospitality industry, English is considered an essential language for written and verbal communication. Although, it is considered as an indispensable language, the knowledge of other foreign languages is an advantage. French is the most commonly spoken and used language after English in the hospitality industry.

Choosing French as an additional or subsidiary subject in hospitality or hotel management graduate programmes or other short term courses is definitely an advantage and ensures better chances of getting a job and promotion. Most of the hospitality students are aware of the importance of knowing French language at the workplace. Moreover, culinary science (Food Production and Cooking) is based on French history, the names of various dishes are based on French language, and their meanings too, are associated with French history and the eating habits of the French people.

Even the word 'Menu', has its origin in French and comes from the French word *Menut*. Various continental dishes like sauce, wine and herb based, are an undistinguished part of French culinary science.

Even the father of the modern cookery was a French person called *Escoffier*.

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Listening and understanding foreign words

Students who want to join the entry level in tourism and hospitality industry should know a foreign language or some key words of it. Some universities and colleges have introduced two foreign languages in the curriculum, the first being English and the second usually French/ German. French is more common.

Some French common sentences and words needed to attend to guests will be discussed in the next session.

Practical Exercises

Activity

Plan a role play activity to communicate with guests in a hotel.

Material Required

Writing material

Procedure

- Plan a role play activity in a group of five or ten members involving various roles like guests, front office official, Meet and Greet Executive, etc.
- Plan your sentences as per the role assigned to you.
- Execute an imaginary situation where the guest is received and welcomed by the Meet and Greet and Front Office personnel.
- Perform the interaction in English, a regional language and in French.
- Note down the difficulties faced and learn further to overcome the same.

Check Your Progress

A. Match the Columns

A		B	
(a)	Upward communication	(i)	A person lower in hierarchy
(b)	Subordinate	(ii)	A person working at the same hierarchy level
(c)	Colleague	(iii)	With a superior

B. Answer in Brief

1. What is the role of English language in the hospitality industry?

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2. Explain the role of foreign language in the hospitality industry.
3. Explain the importance of upward communication.

SESSION 2: CONFIDENT AND CLEAR COMMUNICATION

Speaking without Hesitation and Fear of Being Incorrect

People working in the hospitality should not be hesitant to speak and communicate in a language other than their mother tongue or regional local language. Ability to communicate in English and/or French is an asset in the hospitality industry. The root causes of hesitation may be as given below:

Lack of knowledge

Lack of knowledge about any information or issue leads to lack of self-confidence and hesitation. Same holds for the ability to speak in any language without hesitation. Lack of knowledge of basic grammar, simple words and expressions of any language would certainly lead to hesitation in speaking the language.

Poor skill of speaking or communicating

Speaking can be difficult when we do not have the proper skill. Even if the basic knowledge of words and expressions of a particular language are known theoretically, it requires skill and practice to be able to construct sentences and communicate efficiently and effectively in that language. This skill can be achieved or improved through regular practice. The fear and hesitation can be overcome when you start learning, removing hesitation and practising words that are difficult to pronounce and improving word power.

Vocabulary and Expression

Learning a language and becoming proficient in it is a lifelong process. It requires investment in terms of time. It is important to enhance one's vocabulary and improve one's word power.

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According to experts, the relationship the vocabulary, reading and learning a language is very strong. Vocabulary is related to word knowledge, which means knowing the word right from the pronunciation, to spelling and morphology.

All productive and active vocabulary contains words, which we use in everyday life. Vocabulary and grammar in language learning and speaking is the best indicator of language proficiency and fluency. Experts say that without grammar, very little can be conveyed and without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed. This means having a vocabulary is favourable since it assists in proficiency and one is able to impress others.

Handling and Solving Complaints

People who work in the hospitality sector have to deal with guests from different areas, who speak different languages. Complaints arise when their expectations are not met. Communication becomes very important in order to clearly understand the feelings of the guests and convey our point of view to them.

Complaints and grievances are generally conveyed first to the Meet and Greet Executive since he/she is the person of contact with the guest and as such, the guest is more familiar and at ease with him/her. The Customer Service Executive is supposed to resolve the complaint, if possible, at his level. Otherwise, the complaint is to be forwarded to the appropriate department or section.

Rules for handling guest complaints

Most organisations consider complaints as a means of feedback and improvent in their services. Points to remember while dealing with complaints are as follows:

1. Have a systematic plan: Organisations should have clear welcoming and dedicated office policy to deal with the complaints. In other words, a complaint should be taken positively to help improve the organisation.

2. Priority should be given to complaints: To improve the standards of service, the staff should know how to effectively deal with complaints and treat their redressal as a priority. If the concerned person is not competent

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enough to solve problems, they should report or forward the complaint to a senior authority.

3. Training of staff: Staff should be well-trained to handle the complaints.

4. Always be thankful to the guest: Always apologise to the guest for the problem and thank them for giving you the opportunity to improve the services for the next valuable guest.

Other points to consider

(a) Put yourself in the guest's position
(b) Learn from mistakes
(c) Minimise the reasons for complaints
(d) Always respond
(e) Lead by examples

Language proficiency to 'working knowledge' level

Improvement in language is highly required in the hospitality industry. A person should put continuous effort to learn the language and become proficient. Depth of vocabulary is a key criteria to improve language skills and communication. It refers to the wide variety of words and their connotation.

According to experts, if a person knows a maximum of 3000 words, it can cover 90–95 per cent of the proficiency of the language.

Vocabulary and Expressions in French

France is a country in Europe; the prevalent language in France is French which has originated from the Indo-Roman language family with its roots that can be traced to Latin.

Some common sentences and words used to attend and please the guests are as follows:

1. French Salutations and Expressions:

Bonjour	-	Good Morning/Good Day
Bon Après Midi	-	Good Afternoon
Bonsoir	-	Good Evening

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Bonne Nuit	-	Good Night
Salut	-	Hello
Bon Voyage	-	Happy Journey
Bonne Chance	-	Good Luck
Bonne Santè	-	Have a Good Health
Bon Apètit	-	Have a Good Meal
Bon Anniversaire	-	Happy Birthday/Happy Anniversary
Allons	-	Let Us Go
A Bientôt	-	See You Soon
Au Revoir	-	Goodbye
Adieu	-	Goodbye (long-term)
Madame	-	Mrs. /Madam
Monsieur	-	Mr. /Sir/Gentleman
Mademoiselle	-	Miss
Merci	-	Thank You
Merci Beaucoup	-	Thank You Very Much
Remerci	-	Thanks Again
Bienvenue	-	Welcome
Pardon	-	Sorry
Excusez Moi	-	Excuse Me
S'il Vous Plaît	-	If You Please

2. Jours De La Semaine: Days of the Week:

Lundi	-	Monday
Mardi	-	Tuesday
Mercredi	-	Wednesday
Jeudi	-	Thursday
Vendredi	-	Friday
Samedi	-	Saturday
Dimanche	-	Sunday

3. Mois De L'Année: Months of the Year:

Janvier	-	January
Février	-	February
Mars	-	March
Avril	-	April
Mai	-	May
Juin	-	June
Juillet	-	July
Août	-	August

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Septembre	-	September
Octobre	-	October
Novembre	-	November
Décembre	-	December

4. Couleurs: Colours:

Noir	-	Black
Blanc	-	White
Rouge	-	Red
Rose	-	Pink
Crème	-	Cream
Bleu	-	Blue
Jaune	-	Yellow
Brun	-	Brown
Gris	-	Grey
Orange	-	Orange

5. French Alphabets:

A – Aa	J – Zhee	S – Ess
B – Bay	K – Kuh	T – Tay
C – Say	L – Ell	U – Ooh
D – They	M – Em	V – Way
E – Uh	N – En	W – Dooblvay
F – Eff	O – Oh	X – Eeks
G – Zhay	P – Pay	Y – Eegrek
H – Ash	Q – Koo	Z – Zedd
I – Ee	R – Err	

Practical Exercises

Activity

As a part of your study, visit any centre of language or communication to gather knowledge about vocabulary, tenses and phrases.

Material Required

Writing material

Procedure

- Visit any centre of language or communication of your area and collect the information from an expert about:
  - Vocabulary used in guest interaction
  - Tenses
  - Phrases

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- Note the information in the notebook and discuss in the class.

Check Your Progress

A. Correct the Spelling

S. No.	Incorrect Spelling	Correct Spelling
A	Siganatchre	
B	Baundary	
C	Commite	
D	Vaccumum	
E	Atitude	

B. Answer in Brief

1. Explain the causes of hesitation in brief.
2. Explain the term complaint.
3. Explain the rule of handling complaints.

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Unit 6

Customer-centric Services

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Hospitality is a diverse area with a specialised nature, that is concerned with basic human needs like food, clothes and shelter. The industry broadly provides services to customers. Presently, the hospitality sector is emerging as one of the key drivers of growth among the world, generating a huge amount of revenue and creating millions of job opportunities every year. This industry includes many sectors like accommodation (hotels, motels), food and beverage— F&B (restaurants, food outlets), transportation (airlines, motor car), travel and tourism (travel agent, tour guide), etc. Its prime focus is on customer satisfaction.

The aim of any business is to gain profitable customers and maximise profitability. For the hospitality business, there are many defining elements necessary for its success. Sales operation is one of them. To achieve sales objectives, hospitality firms focus on satisfying their customers. To achieve a firm's objectives, the focus is on a marketing mix (product, price place, and promotion), employees' recruitment and training.

Customer service is a key element of this industry which functions across all sections and departments comprising the industry. This section aims to help students understand how to deliver various services to the guests or customers. Meet and Greet personnel have an important role to play in making a hospitality

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firm viable and successful. The customer service executives should have some basic qualities: customer-orientation, sales-orientation, positive attitude towards customers, good product knowledge, friendly and outgoing personality, honesty, punctuality, good memory, excellent presentation and be well organised.

Session 1: Dealing with Customers and Assessment of Quality in Service

Definition of a Customer

An individual or business that purchases goods or services produced by another business is called a *customer*. A customer creates the demand for goods and services, which is why attracting customers is the primary goal of most businesses. Businesses often compete with each other through advertisements or lowered prices to attract more customers.

Classification of Customers

Loyal customers

These are the customers who are satisfied with the product or service being sold and therefore; keep coming back to the same organisation or firm for repeat business. Although, these customers are less in number, yet they play a big role in promoting the sales and profit of the firm through their loyalty.

Discount customers

These are also repeat customers but they visit the firm for purchase only when discounts or schemes are offered on branded or even regular products. These customers are always inclined to purchase products at low cost.

Impulsive customers

These are customers who purchase only on impulse or on the spur of a moment. They generally do not have a specific product on their purchase list but just do so as and when they find a product appealing or useful. These customers do not need to be convinced by the seller.

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Need-based customers

These customers go in for purchase only when needed. Also, mostly such customers buy items which are familiar to them or which have a specific utility.

Wandering customers

These are customers who visit sellers just for checking out the products available in the market while they do not have a specific need or a plan to purchase any specific product. These are the least profitable customers.

Maintaining Customer Profile

This is an important exercise for any company. A database of customers or clients helps a customer service executive prepare for planning the meet and greet service protocol according to the profile of the customer. A basic customer profile that a customer service executive should know:

1. Names of clients
2. Status of client in the organisation, e.g., 'VIP' or 'Key Guest', etc.
3. Previous visits of clients
4. Volume of sale rendered by the customer
5. Seasonality of availing services by the customer
6. Products/services purchased by the customer
7. Customer's basic contact information:
   (a) Name
   (b) Title
   (c) Address (both mailing, courier and post office)
   (d) E-mail
   (e) Contact number (if possible)
8. Special needs of clients
9. Past problems of or with the client

This is only a partial list of information that is provided to the customer service executive. The purpose is to assist the executive in serving the client and making the sale a success.

Customer interaction

Dealing with the customer is an essential part of the hospitality industry. A hospitality industry customer

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wants to enjoy the product and services provided by the industry. Sometimes a few of them may raise issues regarding the products, services, policies, procedures and the guidelines. In such significant, customer interaction becomes a significant issue and proper training is required for a good interaction and customer satisfaction. The following points should be considered for effective customer interaction:

1. Never interrupt the customer: When the customer is asking or sharing something, never interrupt in between. It can upset the customer. If you have to interrupt, ask for permission. Ask for the customer's ideas and his thoughts about the problem.

2. Listen attentively: During interaction with the customer, be focused on the conversation. Do not be distracted by anything else. It is important for the customer to know that you are listening.

3. Avoid negative questions: In customer interaction, frame positive questions and keep the conversations open ended.

4. Do not become too technical while explaining: While solving a customer's problem, do not go into heavy technical details in your explanations. The customer may have little technical knowledge, so use simple language to explain the situation.

5. Use positive sentences in communication: Communicate with positive sentences to build the confidence of the customer. While speaking, be clear in speech and pronunciation. In hospitality industry, service excellence depends on your understanding of your customer. So anticipate the customer's reactions and act accordingly.

Feedback

Feedback is the comment or ideas given by a customer for a product or service. Organisations consider these as opportunities to improve. The next chapter deals with feedback forms and other media used for feedback.

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Target customers and their needs

To start a business, it is important to plan a step-by-step market strategy. This will not only help to identify a specific target market but will also help to create a customer profile. To market any product or service, it is essential that we tailor the sales and marketing effort specifically to reach the target customer. It saves a lot of time, energy and funds if the target customers' needs can be assessed.

Identifying the market and customer

Three factors should be kept in mind while identifying the market and the customer.

1. Target customer who is going to buy the product or avail the service.
2. Segmentation for easy focus and segregation of customers.
3. Research for customer views or reviews.

Types of customer and market

A customer is an actual or potential buyer of the product. They can be classified into three categories:

1. Individual or household customers who buy goods for their own use or benefit from the purchase of any product or service. For example, medicines and grocery.
2. Industrial customers who purchase products or services for direct use to produce other products, like agriculture products or factory products.
3. Reseller customers who are middlemen or intermediaries, such as wholesalers or retailers, who buy products to resell and this earn profit.

Creating demand

To create a demand in the market for products and services, companies take several steps to get a market share. The given steps must be followed to create demand:

- Sales objectives should be carefully decided right at the outset.
- Market research should be conducted to determine the consumers' needs.

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- Cost effectiveness can be worked out by the company by charging prices lower than the competitor's.
- Effective sales promotion includes a variety of promotional tools to stimulate a strong market response. The tools could be oriented for consumer promotion (through offering demos, samples, discounts, vouchers, etc.), trade promotion (through giving free goods, cooperative selling with other firms etc) or for sales force promotion which could be through offering incentives, bonus, commission on sales etc.
- Reviewing results is important for the success of the company.

Effective sales promotion includes a variety of promotional tools, such as, consumer promotion, trade promotion and sales force promotion. Consumer promotions within this industry often take the form of special offers or packages designed to entice travellers to book accommodations or experiences. For instance, a hotel might offer a "stay three nights, get the fourth night free" promotion (consumer promotion), encouraging guests to extend their stay and enhancing the overall value proposition. Trade promotions are equally crucial, especially in forging partnerships with travel agencies, tour operators, and online booking platforms. Hotels or tour operators may offer exclusive deals or commissions to travel agents who promote their properties or services (trade promotion), incentivising them to prioritise their offerings over competitors. Furthermore, sales force promotions are instrumental in driving performance and maintaining high levels of motivation among sales teams. Hotels or tour operators might run sales contests with rewards such as cash bonuses, free stays, or travel vouchers for top-performing sales representatives (sales force promotion), stimulating friendly competition and driving sales results.

Selection of clientele or services

Market segmentation is a very important process of any company. A market is a gathering of buyers and sellers

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who differ in one or more ways— in their requirements, needs, expectations, resources, geographic location, buying behaviour or practices. Every buyer is a unique market in oneself because of one's specific individual needs and wants.

Therefore, a seller might design a separate marketing programme for each buyer. A market can be classified in several ways, some of which are:

- Geographic segmentation
- Demographic segmentation
- Psychographic segmentation
- Behavioural segmentation

After effective market segmentation, the company must look at the segment size and growth, segment-structured attractiveness, and the company's objectives and resources before deciding the target market where a set of buyers share common needs or characteristics.

Product or service design

A room at a famous hotel in Mumbai, a pack of French fries, a vacation package in Goa, food and beverage in a restaurant, a bus tour of historic sites, a convention in a modern convention centre, are all products of different kind.

A product is "anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or need. It includes physical objects, services, places, organisation and ideas."

Source : https://marketing-insider.eu/definition-of-product/

Characteristics of hospitality products and services

- **Intangibility:** Unlike physical products of hospitality, services cannot be seen, tasted, felt, heard or smelled before they are purchased. And hospitality being largely service-oriented, intangibility is a big factor.
- **Inseparability:** In most hospitality products and services, both the service provider and the customer must be present for the transaction to occur.

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- **Variability:** Hospitality products and services are highly variable. Their quality depends on who provides them and where they are being provided.
- **Perishability:** Hospitality products and services cannot be stored because of their perishability (it is time-bound).

Level of hospitality products

Hospitality products can be divided into four categories:

- **Core products:** This is the most basic level, which the buyer is really buying. For example, hotel room, taxi, meals, etc.
- **Facilitating products:** These are the goods or services that supplement, facilitate and enhance the use or experience of the core product or service by the guest. For example, a hotel check-in, check-out services, telephone, restaurant, etc.
- **Supporting products:** These are extra products offered to add value to the core product and help to differentiate it from the competitor product. In a corporate hotel, a health spa is a supporting product.
- **Augmented products:** An augmented product has been enhanced by its seller with added features or services to distinguish it from the same product offered by its competitors. Augmenting a product involves including intangible benefits or add-ons that go beyond the product itself.

Customer relations and complaints

Hospitality firms frequently use 'Personal relations' of a customer service executive with the guest as an important feedback medium. Personal relations enable one-to-one interaction with customers. Personal interaction makes the customer feel important and creates a positive impression of the company. Further, hospitality firms can use the data to understand customer behaviour and preferences and generate loyalty to increase repeat sales.

How to interact with customers?

- The hotel or restaurant manager and specifically the customer service executive should approach

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the customers and enquire about their satisfaction with the quality of services and products offered and request for suggestions.
- The organisation can also offer rewards.
- The hospitality firm or its customer service personnel can keep in touch with the customers through letter, e-mail or social media and keep them updated about any forthcoming special offers or celebrations in the hotel or hospitality organisation.
- The hospitality firm can also take feedback over the telephone.

Solving the guest's problems and handling complaints

When guests are dissatisfied with some services and express their unhappiness to employees, the company must note the feedback and take corrective measures.

Types of guests' complaints

- Mechanical complaints related to malfunctioning or non-functioning of systems and equipment, such as, television, geyser, etc.
- Behaviour complaints related to staff behaviour, when a guest feels insulted by a rude or tactless hotel staff.
- Service-related complaints regarding the services provided, like delay in receiving or send off, check-in, room service, etc.
- Unusual complaints related with unusual demands like a lack of spa, lack of gymnasium, etc.

Handling guests' complaints

Hospitality is a service-centric industry, so the customer service personnel and the front desk staff should always be ready to handle guests' complaints tactfully. They should try to resolve the problems immediately and appease the customer. The staff should always keep certain guidelines in mind, when handling guest complaints.

- Listen with concern and empathy.
- Stay calm. Do not argue with the guest.

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- Be aware of the guest's self-esteem. Exhibit personal involvement in the problem.
- Try to address the guests by their names frequently.
- Take the guest away from crowd, if possible, so that other guests do not overhear.
- Explain to the guest what best can be done in the given circumstances. Offer choices, if available. However, take care of not promising the impossible, and do not exceed your authority.
- Give the customer an approximate time for completion of corrective actions towards resolving the complaint.
- Monitor the progress of the corrective action.
- Follow up and inform the guest to ensure that the problem was resolved satisfactorily.
- If a problem cannot be solved, the front desk staff should admit to this early and call the superior.

Customer views, reviews and expectations on products and services

Customer review is a feedback for the purchase of any product or service. The review makes it clear if the product or service has been liked or not. Those who have not used the product or availed the service cannot review the same.

How to get customer review?

1. Before marketing any product or service, focus on the target group or customers so that feedback can be taken from them.
2. Obtain the e-mail of the customer so that they can be contacted from time to time for new product reviews.
3. In modern marketing, organisations, mostly online shopping apps, provide information about other products in the same category and collect reviews for the same.
4. Create a review graphic as it shows lots of customer reviews in one view.
5. For reviews of any product or service, provide free samples to dedicated customers. The more people trying and testing the product, the more the reviews.

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6. In hospitality sector, customers are ignorant about various products and services till they try them out. It is not a bad idea to offer trials of certain products or services for customer reviews.

Using customer feedback and rating to improve relationship with the customer

Public Relations (PR) is an important marketing tool to reach out to customers. Building the foundation for a strong relationship with the customer comes from mutual trust and respect. Therefore, PR is a cost-effective promotional tool. The following activities help in reaching out to the customers:

1. Press releases help to place information about your product, services or organisation into the news media to attract attention of potential customers and other stakeholders.
2. Product publicity involves the various means of publicising products.
3. Testimonial from a satisfied customer provides authentic endorsements of a product, service, or brand. These testimonials can be in the form of written reviews, video testimonials, or quotes that highlight positive experiences and outcomes.
4. Corporate communication covers both internal and external communication and promotes understanding about the organisation and the product.
5. Make the product or service searchable on various online platforms for more visibility.
6. Knowing the target customer can establish trust between the company and the customer.

Working on feedback

A company uses customer feedback to analyse what needs to be corrected and where improvement is required. Feedback is waste if it is not properly handled.

How to manage feedback?

- Keep a proper record of the feedback.
- The management should respond quickly to both negative and positive feedback.

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- Set a deadline for corrective measures.
- Positive feedback should not only evoke satisfied feelings in the company but should also mean sending an appreciation letter to the customer.
- The management should always be ready for positive or negative feedback. This enables the firm to do better.
- There should be regular meetings with staff to let them hear about both the positive and negative feedback.
- A firm can use any mechanism to gather feedback but never ignore feedback.
- If needed, corrective action should be taken, and the customer should be informed about the same.

Feedback forms

Please tick in appropriate box.

Sample Feedback Form				
	Excellent	**Good**	**Average**	**Need Improvement**
	FOOD			
Flavour of food				
Quality of food				
Presentation				
Value for money				
Freshness				
	SERVICES			
How friendly services				
Explanation of menu				
Time taken for servicing				
Account settlement				
	VENUE			
Location				

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Atmosphere				
Cleanliness				
Staff presentation				

Other Comments: .....

Your Name: .....

Contact Phone No: .....

Customer feedback form

Please tick in the appropriate box.

Hotel ABC – Customer Feedback Form				
	Excellent	Good	Average	Need Improvement
Meet and greet services				
Front office staff behaviour				
Lobby services				
Check-in, check-out procedure				
Room and bathroom decor				
Cleanliness				
Room services				
Restaurant services				
Restaurant ambience				
Restaurant— food & beverage				
Restaurant-staff				
Service response time				
Spa services				
Fitness centre				
Recreational activities				

Overall hotel rating in 1 to 10 scales*
*Excellent: 8–10 *Good: 6–7 *Average: 4–5 *Poor: below 3

Other Comments: .....

Your Name: .....

Contact Phone No: .....

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Dealing with customers

A customer service executive has to deal with guests from arrival to departure. As such, the first interaction of a guest with the hotel's representative is with the customer service official.

Customer sensitisation and generating awareness

For any business, customer is the prime asset. This holds true in the hospitality business too. Due to its service based nature, it is more customer-centric than any other business. A business growth can only be achieved by following the right process, a strategic direction and delivering right values towards the customers. To train the staff towards customer sensitisation, many hospitality firms organise training programmes for them. The training programmes include:

- Pledging to provide the finest personal service with genuine care and keeping the comfort of customers in mind.
- Supporting a sustainable and responsible culture of the organisation.
- Ensuring welfare and well-being of the guests so long as they are at the hotel.
- Trying to deliver more than promised services and over and above the customer's expectation.
- Focusing on providing a good experience to the customer with the motto, "Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself."
- A customer's complaint should always be the first priority and remember that the customer is always right.

The loyal customer

Hospitality industry faces cut throat competition. So, companies find it easier to focus on retaining the existing customers to increase their sales, rather than attracting new ones. A good customer relationship manager is a customer's delight. In turn, delighted customers remain loyal to the company and its products.

The focus is to maintain a long-term customer relationship or Customer Lifetime Value (CLV) cycle, rather than single transactions. The benefits of continued patronage of loyal customers are— reduced marketing

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costs, decreased price sensitivity of loyal customers, and repeat partnership activities of loyal customers.

For long-term success, hospitality companies try to build a base of loyal customers who will provide repeat business and influence other potential customers. This requires systematic planning. For example, a firm may launch a loyalty programme into its smartphone app for customers.

Table 6.1: Example of a loyalty programme

Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3	Visit 4	Visit 5	Visit 6
To be paid fully	Free Potato Fries	Free Veg. Muffin or Egg and Cheese Muffin	Free Hot Cakes	Free Fresh Brew Coffee/Tea	Free Veg or Chicken Sausage or Muffin with Egg

Creating customer's loyalty

The following points can be kept in mind to create customer's loyalty:

1. Train staff to provide personal service to customers.
2. Provide incentives to induce customers to increase the frequency of business.
3. Provide special service options by offering enhanced services or something extra to loyal customers.
4. Develop strategies to encourage long relationship by offering repeat customers special prices or rates.
5. Maintain a customer database by keeping an up-to-date set of records on customer purchase history, preferences, demographics, etc.
6. Communicate with customers by reaching out to individual customers through direct or specialised media, using non-mass media approaches.

Practical Exercises

Visit a star hotel in your vicinity and see how guests are received at the airport and railway station.

Materials Required

Writing material

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Procedure

- Visit a star hotel near your area.
- Discuss with the Hospitality Manager and obtain the schedule of receiving guests from the airport and the railway station.
- Accompany the hotel's Meet and Greet officer when he/she goes to receive guests.
- Make detailed observations as to what is the procedure followed for receiving and welcoming the guests.
- Also observe how a guest is received at the hotel and how he/she is sent off.
- Note down the procedure of receiving and seeing off a guest.
- Make a special note of the attitude and behaviour of the customer service personnel while interacting with the guest.
- Make a report and discuss in the class.

Check Your Progress

A. Match the Columns

A		B	
(a)	Customer	(i)	Views about goods and services
(b)	Customer profile	(ii)	Purchases goods and services
(c)	Customer feedback	(iii)	Name and contact details
(d)	Customer retention	(iv)	Loyalty programmes

B. Answer in Brief

1. Explain how should a Customer Service Executive interact with the guest.
2. Explain how customer feedback can be obtained by a hotel.
3. What are common guest complaints? How should these be handled?

SESSION 2: WORKING TOWARDS ACHIEVING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Being honest and transparent while interacting with customers will hold you in good stead in making a long-term customer base. Following points ensure the maintenance of customer base:

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1. Honesty

(a) We should keep our promises made to the customer.
(b) We should take our responsibility towards the customer seriously.
(c) We should always have confidence and faith in the customer.
(d) Communication with the customer should always be clear to generate assurance.

2. Cooperation

(a) We should work as a team to build cooperation and faith and to achieve success.
(b) We should cooperate with each other to achieve common goals.
(c) We should always focus on the important issues of business improvement.
(d) We should always find a solution in the interest of the organisation.

3. Openness

(a) We should share information and knowledge about the best product available with the customer.
(b) We should always try to receive constructive feedback from the customer.
(c) Avoid confrontation with customers. Any issue should be resolved amicably keeping the customer's satisfaction and the company's reputation in mind.
(d) Take steps to ensure issues do not crop up but if they do, don't wait for them to escalate. Resolve them as soon as possible.

Interacting with the customer

When interacting with the customer, always keep the following points in mind:

1. Honour your word.
2. Honour your commitment.
3. Stay focused.
4. Be responsible for your hotel or organisation always.

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Treating a customer fairly and with due respect

In the hospitality industry, a customer "comes as a guest and leaves as a friend". So for a guest to provide repeat business, treat them fairly and with due respect so that they go away happy and satisfied.

1. Consider the customer first over other issues.
2. Each customer's behaviour, attitude and knowledge is different so treat them accordingly.
3. For better business, understand a customer's needs and expectations and go out of the way to meet their expectations.
4. Refrain from making any negative comment to the guest or in front of the guest.

Market strategy for development

Aim, policy and strategy

Business houses set their own aims and objectives for profitability, sales growth, market share improvement, cost containment, etc. The hospitality industry also (that is diversified into hotels, motels, resorts, restaurants, etc.) does the same.

Aim of sales

In the hospitality industry, these may include:

- Penetrating the existing market
- Developing new markets
- High sales volume
- High profit margins
- High market share
- Excellent customer services
- Focus on customer satisfaction

Sales policy

A sales policy is a systematic process of developing, coordinating, monitoring the various decisions that have a direct bearing on the company's sales.

The sales policy may include:

- Market segmentation
- Target market and product positioning policy
- Delivery policy
- Price policy

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- Promotion policy
- Supply policy
- Code of behaviour towards customers
- Feedback policy
- Indicators of sales success

Strategy

Companies formulate strategies to achieve established aims and objectives. The company decides which customers it will serve (segmentation and targeting) and how. It identifies the total market and then divides it into segments, selects the most promising segment, and focuses on serving and satisfying customers in these segments. The sales strategy is always guided by a mix of marketing factors that include products, price, place and promotion.

To achieve the established goals, the following strategy may be used:

- All types of promotion to attract profitable customers.
- Build profitable customer relationship through various loyalty programmes.
- Increase sales volume through personalised sales.
- Price always matter, so focus on the best quality products at a low price.
- Increase sales through a motivating (incentives, rewards) sales force.
- Increase business-to-business sales through negotiation.

Sales policy

Sales policy is always customer-oriented. Every hospitality firm has its own sales policy as per the organisation, nature of business, size, location, rules and regulations; and business ethics. Some of these include:

- An advance payment of 50 per cent to make a reservation. The remaining amount is paid upon departure.
- Check-in at the hotel before 12 a.m. on the day of arrival.
- Vacate rooms before 10 a.m. on the day of departure.
- Prior to departure, your final account must be settled at the reception.

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- The specified prices are informative only.
- Payments for the reserved period of stay are made at the reception, and are made according to the relevant price list on the day the payment is made.
- The hotel reserves the right to reject, cancel or change a reservation if there is a problem with the reservation.
- Reservations are held till 10 p.m. on the day of arrival.

Cancellation policy

For any cancellations, the reservation department/desk needs to be contacted.

- If reservation is done more than five days prior to arrival, the advance payment may be refunded fully or partially depending on the hotel's policy.
- The advance payment may not be returned in case of cancellation done less than five days before the expected arrival.
- The advance payment is not returned in case of no show i.e., if the guest does not turn up without cancelling the reservation.

Customer-centric market survey

Market survey is a very effective tool to understand the market potential. To create a valuable product for the customers and to build a meaningful, long-term relationship with them, it is important to first gain a deep insight into what they need and want.

Market survey is a process that identifies and defines market potential and challenges. Through the survey, firms find out customers' choices and buying preferences. The analysed outcome enables marketers to create customer–centric strategies. For example, when McDonald's decided to add salads to its menu, its planners had to research customers' preferences for the types of vegetables and dressings. A survey is best suited to gathering descriptive information. Survey research can be either structured or unstructured. Structured questionnaire has fixed alternatives like Multiple Choice, Yes/No or True/False questions, and is mostly used for quantitative studies. Thus, each respondent is

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presented with exactly the same questions in the same order. Unstructured questionnaire is a set of open ended questions and the respondents are not restricted to a fixed choice. It lets the interviewer probe respondents and guides the interview according to their answers.

Advantages

- A survey is flexible. It can be used to obtain many different kinds of information.
- It provides information quickly.
- Compared to other forms of market research, this is low cost.

Disadvantages

- Sometimes people are unable to immediately respond to questions.
- Sometimes people are reluctant to answer questions.
- Respondents may not answer the survey questions honestly.

Making of a brand value

Before trying to understand what brand value is, we must understand what a brand is. A brand is a product or service that takes on a distinctive identity of its own in the market. Therefore, brand value is the financial worth of this brand.

Once established, maintaining the quality of the brand is a very difficult task for any marketing company. This is where research and marketing strategies come into play, to maintain the brand and brand value.

Product or brand value enhancement

For any organisation, it is important to modify or improve the existing product for quality and brand value enhancement.

Product improvement involves modifications and improvements to the existing product by way of quality, size, and design to give the product an almost new look. This also helps to compete with other producers of the same product.

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Such enhancement and improvement involves long-term planning and adjustment in the product line to realise the objective efficiently and economically.

The enhancement of any product quality and brand value depends on three major factors:

1. Product innovation
2. Product development improvement
3. Product differentiation

Practical Exercises

Activity

Conduct an interview with the salesperson of a hotel. Ask about hotel sales strategy and challenges, which he/she faces during sales job.

Materials Required

Writing material

Procedure

- Invite for a sales executive of luxury hotel a guest lecture.
- Plan an interactive lecture on hotel sales with the students in the class.
- Students will ask about the hotel sale strategies and challenges during the lecture session.
- Ask students to note down the important information.
- Prepare a report after the lecture.

Check Your Progress

A. State True or False

1. The reservation can be cancelled not less than 5 days prior to arrival.
2. Market survey does not help in finding market potential.
3. Maintaining a status or product quality is a very difficult task for any marketing company.
4. Market research is not an effective tool of determining consumers' needs.

B. Answer in Brief

1. Discuss the aims of sales in the hospitality industry.
2. Explain honesty, cooperation and openness as tool for customer satisfaction.
3. Discuss the reservation cancellation policy of hotels.

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4. Elaborate the phrase on customer "comes as guest and leaves as a friend".
5. Write short notes on:
   (a) Sales policy and sale strategy
   (b) Customer-centric market survey

SESSION 3: FULFILLING THE CUSTOMER'S NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS

Customer's Needs, Expectations and Their Fulfillment

Needs are necessities of human beings, such as physical needs of food, clothing, shelter, etc., and social needs of safety, belonging, affection, fun, relaxation, etc.

Wants are a desire for things that we would like to have but do not necessarily need. For example, wanting a *paratha* when a *dosa* is available.

Demands are a consumer's willingness to pay for the goods or services that they desire.

Selling of hospitality sector products

Service

Selling hospitality products is different from selling other consumer products. Hospitality products can only be experienced and felt unlike other tangible products that can be touched or seen. Hospitality products can be divided into two categories.

Tangible product is a physical item that is visible and can be touched. In hospitality industry, this would mean a hotel room, food and beverages, bathrobes, bath products and even the in-room coffee maker. Some hotels also run in-house souvenir shops for their guests.

Intangible products do not have a physical nature. Included in this category are hotel services, such as booking, pick-up and drop, check-in, check-out, room service, internet services and parking facility. Luxury properties often advertise their numerous property amenities, such as discotheque, gymnasium, swimming pool, water sports or in-house spa, etc.

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Customer expectations and satisfaction

The quality of services and customer satisfaction are critical factors for success in any business. They not only help in gaining an edge over the competitor but also helps in retaining customers. Given that the cost of attracting new customers is higher than the cost of retaining the existing ones, special attention should be given to customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Customer satisfaction can be measured by:

- Making periodic surveys through e-mail or telephone.
- Monitoring customer loss rate.
- Collecting regular feedback through questionnaires.
- Speaking to customers directly, by asking questions such as "Are you happy or satisfied with our services?","Would you recommend this product or service to a friend?", etc.
- Mystery guest visits.
- Reading their comment cards.
- Observing what they eat—'garbage survey'.
- Analysing sale per dish.
- Speaking to employees.

Thus, success and profit of any hospitality business is closely connected with customer satisfaction. This is one of the main preconditions for creating a loyal customer base in the business.

Introduction of new products and services

When a hospitality organisation launches a new product, the idea is for it to have a long and lucrative life. The product is not expected to sell forever, but they do want to earn enough profit to compensate for the effort or risk in launching the new product. For this, market strategies are planned and formulated from time to time. The strategies change often due to the changing market situations. A product life cycle consists of five main stages.

(a) Product development is when an idea to develop a product begins with zero sales and the cost of product development is considered an investment.

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(b) Introduction is when a product is introduced in the market. This is also a period of slow sales growth. During this time, profit is secondary as the company that has invested heavily is looking for customer views and reviews.

(c) Growth is a period of rapid market acceptance and increasing profit.

(d) Maturity is when the product has achieved acceptance in the market. During this phase the sales growth slows down but eventually picks up.

(e) Decline is when sales fall quickly and profit comes to a draw.

Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a product or service meeting a customer's expectations. If the product performance falls short of a customer's expectations, the buyer is dissatisfied; if it matches the expectations, the buyer is satisfied; and if it exceeds expectations, the buyer is delighted.

Price is the money charged for a good or service and is the only way to earn revenue for any company. For example, a hotel charges room rent or restaurant charges for food and beverages. Revenue comes from customers, so it is most important to understand who your customers are. This helps define what makes your organisation unique compared to others in the industry.

Therefore, it is important for successful marketing of your hotel or resort to know clearly which type(s) of customers you wish to target or reach, then try and create an accurate customer profile. Thus, all established, branded hotel and resort groups position their hotels and resorts according to customers' needs and profile. These big groups mostly categorise their properties in all or some of the four segments: luxury, premium, mid-market and economy. The hotels in the different segments are named differently from the main brand and function as wholly owned subsidiaries of the company. Thus, for example, the Taj group of hotels has its premium segment named as 'Vivanta', the mid-market brand as 'The Gateway' and the budget hotels as 'Ginger' without any reference to the brand Taj.

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Affordability of selling price

Price plays a very crucial role in a consumer's buying decisions. When a consumer thinks of buying any product or service, the question of availability of resources is what comes to mind first and then the demand. So, in a buying process, it is the consumer who decides whether a product's price is right. So, while setting prices, the management or seller must consider how consumers are most likely to perceive price and how these perceptions affect consumers' buying decisions. Like other marketing decisions, pricing decisions must be buyer-oriented.

Effective pricing opens doors. It requires a creative awareness of the target market, why they buy, and how they make their buying decisions. Marketers must try to look at a consumer's reasons for choosing a product and set the price according to consumer perceptions, especially consumers' affordability. Because consumers vary in the values that they assign to products and services, marketers often vary their pricing strategies for different segments.

Feedback cycle and dealing with negative feedback

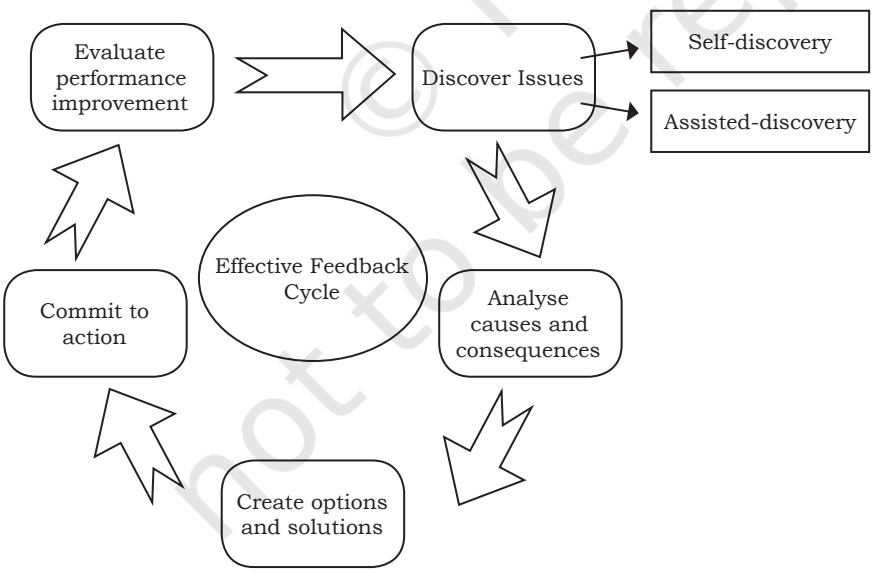


Fig. 6.1: Feedback cycle

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Even negative feedback is positive

Always take negative feedback positively, because it shows there are people who want you to become better. If they didn't care, they wouldn't have provided any feedback.

Negative feedback also presents opportunities for growth. While negative feedback may not be instantly pleasant to receive, it gives us a different perspective to consider. By learning from all the different perspectives, we can grow much faster.

Positive feedback encourages and inspires. Negative feedback helps to improve.

There's always something to learn from every feedback. So ask yourself:

- What have I learned about myself?
- What have I learned about others?
- How can I improve? What can I do differently from now on?

Retaining customers

A satisfied customer is one who is dealt with honestly, fairly, and with respect. A satisfied customer will not only remain loyal but will also recommend the product or service to others.

When a hospitality organisation keeps profit as primary and customer satisfaction as secondary, it will not only have very low repeat business but will also have a very poor market image.

A successful hospitality organisation understands that profit is the result of running a business well rather than its sole purpose. A satisfied customer will pay a fair price for the product and this fair price includes a fair profit for the organisation.

Promotions to improve customer satisfaction

A hospitality organisation should have strong sales promotion programmes to ensure customer satisfaction. Number of employees involved, target customer, customer profile, and customer needs and wants should be kept in mind during these programmes. A minimum incentive is essential for the success of such

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promotional programmes. The larger the incentive, the more will be the sales response.

For example, a restaurant promotion programme can include coupons, flyer pamphlets, cards, free drinks, etc. sent by mail or through advertisements. Each promotion method involves a different level of reach and cost. The length of the promotion is also important. A short programme may not reach every target customer or a large programme may have a customer wanting to avail it after the promotion is over.

The following points could be useful in a hospitality sales promotion programme and restaurant promotion:

1. ***Put service first*:** Prompt and efficient service can definitely create a great first-time experience of the customer. Be sure your servers are guiding new diners to the dishes you are known for and those that are particularly good at bringing people back. Also, be sure the servers promote specials, seasonal menu changes or a specific wine or cocktail. Keeping connected with your customers and informing them of special offers and events through social media, telephone, etc., go a long way in bringing in repeat customers.
2. ***Smart menu planning*:** Identify the 'signature' items, that the diners are most likely to associate with your establishment as unique and include them in your regular menu. Make sure your servers provide feedback about which dishes get the most positive feedback from customers to higher authorities personally or at staff meetings. Then have the servers promote the most winning dishes to first-time guests.
3. ***Reward customers for their loyalty*:** Loyalty cannot be bought, it has to be earned. Once you have created a great dining experience and won the guests over with signature food and drink options, it is time to offer your customers something special. So, get to know your diners and custom-tailor your loyalty offerings to suit their likes and dislikes. Use the loyalty programme to retain your most valued customers. This could include vouchers, discounts, gifts, mementos, etc.

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Practical Exercises

Activity

Call or visit any hotels of five star category. Request them for information about their Customer Sales Promotion Programme, and Loyalty Programme.

Materials Required

Telephone, mobile, writing material, etc.

Procedure

- First of all arrange hotels, contact number.
- Call them, and request for information.
- Ask about the sales promotion programme and their special features.
- Make notes and prepare a report on it. Present and discuss in the class.
- Make your own opinion which one is more attractive for customers.

Check Your Progress

A. State True or False

1. Customer satisfaction depends upon the quality of products and/or services offered.
2. Price is not the amount of money charged for a good or service.
3. Effective pricing increases clientele.
4. Negative feedback does not offer any opportunity for growth.

B. Answer in Brief

1. Describe customer satisfaction.
2. Write in detail how to retain good customers.
3. Explain the important points for hospitality sales promotion.
4. Write short notes on:
   (a) Intangible product
   (b) Tangible product

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Glossary

Abuse: *Mistreatment*

Accommodation: *These are commercial space/premises found in hospitality industry on rent basis like hotel, motels, resorts etc.*

Analysis: *Detailed examination of the report.*

Assessment: *The action of judging someone or something.*

Attribute: *Quality of a person that helps in defining his character. Example includes honest, humble, confident etc.*

Behavioural Etiquettes: *Mirror of the one's character.*

Conduct: *It is the manner in which a person acts in a particular action. Example includes way of act by restaurant staff in restaurant.*

Crises: *A time of intense difficulty or danger.*

Criticism: *It is the practice of disapproval of something on the basis of judging the faults or mistakes.*

Customer: *Person or organisation who/which uses the services or commodity.*

Demographics: *Statistical data relating to the population especially human beings and particular groups within it.*

Dorsum: *Back of the hand*

Eating Etiquette: *Part of daily life activity to behave in proper manner during eating. Must always be followed.*

Elderly Guest: *Senior citizen or old people are described as elderly guest age 65 years or more.*

Ergonomic Hazard: *Physical conditions that may pose risk of injury to the musculoskeletal system, such as the muscles or ligaments of the lower back, tendons or nerves of the hands/wrists, or bones surrounding the knees etc.*

Evacuating: *Remove from a place of danger to a safer place.*

Feedback: *It is a data collected from a customer or guest for improvement in product or services.*

Formal Communication: *The communication refers to interexchange of information officially.*

Formalities: *It is framework in which every individual or employees of organisation works.*

Grievances: *Grievances refers to a feeling of resentment.*

Guest: *Person who uses services because services are provided to them with great honour so he is called guests .*

Huddle: *A close grouping of people or things.*

Hygiene: *Condition or practices conducive to maintaining health and preventing disease especially through cleanliness.*

Infected: *Any surface or body parts having presence of harmful bacteria or any microorganisms that have adverse effect on health.*

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Louver: *A window blind or shutter with horizontal slats, blades or slips of glass, wood or other material that are angled to admit light and air, but to keep out rain and direct sunshine. The angle of the slats may be adjustable, usually in blinds and windows, or fixed.*

Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS): *The MSDS lists the hazardous ingredients of a product, its physical and chemical characteristics (e.g. flammability, explosive properties), its effect on human health, the chemicals with which it can adversely react, handling precautions, the types of measures that can be used to control exposure etc.*

Maternity Leave: *Facility availed by women employee in organisation for pregnancy.*

Medical Travellers: *Coming to different countries from their native countries to avail medical facilities of other countries.*

MOD/FOM: *Manager on Duty/Front Office Manager.*

Perspectives: *It is the way of thinking or judging about situation.*

Pest: *Any type of insect or living organisation which may harm human bodies, food materials or any type of useable items.*

PPE: *Personal Protective Equipment.*

Prohibit: *Something is forbidden.*

Recreation: *It is an activity performed for leisure or entertainment.*

Reporting: *Providing information to senior for necessary action about anything or incident.*

Reward: *It is the sort of prize given to employee or anybody, directly or indirectly.*

Scaffolds: *A structure used to support during construction and repair and maintenance work.*

Scalds: *Injury with very hot liquid or steam.*

Sensitisation: *The action or process of making an organism abnormally sensitive to a foreign substance.*

Sexual Harassment: *It can be described as any unwelcome sexual conduct on the job that can create a hostile or offensive working milieu.*

Sheath: *A close-fitting cover for the blade of a knife or cutter.*

Stakeholders: *A stakeholder is a party that has an interest in a company and can either affect or be affected by the business.*

Testimonials: *These are formal statements testifying to someone's character and qualifications.*

Veneer: *A "paper thin" cut of wood that's applied to both sides of a strong core surface, like furniture-grade MDF or substrate material, to seal and stabilise it.*

Waste: *Any type of material which is not useful.*

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Answer Key

Unit 1: Etiquette and Hospitable Conduct

Session 1: Meaning, Components and Goal of Hospitality

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. 'Atithi Devo Bhava'
2. customer
3. Customer satisfaction

Session 2: Importance of Behavioural, Personal and Hospitality Etiquette

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. Etiquette
2. Social etiquette
3. Telephone
4. Manners

Session 3: Professional Dealing of Guests

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. Office manners
2. formal
3. Formal communication
4. Politeness

Session 4: Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. Customer satisfaction
2. Brand
3. guest review
4. repeat

Unit 2: Gender and Age Sensitive Service Practices

Session 1: Women's Rights and Respect at Workplace

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. Maternity Benefit Act
2. sexual harassment
3. Shops and Establishments Act
4. 1997

Session 2: General Facilities for Each Age and Gender

A. Match the Columns

(a) ii (b) i (c) iv (d) iii (e) v

Session 3: Standard Etiquette Practices with Women at Workplace

A. State True or False

1. True 2. True 3. True 4. True 5. True

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Unit 3: Health and Hygiene

Session 1: Cleaning Around Workplace

A. Match the Columns

(a) v (b) i (c) vi (d) iii (e) iv (f) ii

Session 2: Importance of Personal Hygiene Practices

A. State True or False

1. True 2. False 3. True 4. True 5. True

Unit 4: Safety at Workplace

Session 1: Prevention of Work Hazard

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. Hazards
2. Material Safety Data Sheet
3. PPE
4. Occupational accidents

Session 2: Standard Safety Procedure

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. Emergency Key
2. Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning
3. Aisles
4. flammable
5. Storage

Session 3: First and PPEs While doing Hazardous Work

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. Prohibitory
2. Warning
3. Fire fighting
4. Mandatory
5. Emergency exit

Session 4: Safety Measures for Workplace Inspection

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. Safety inspections
2. First-line supervisor
3. Safety professional
4. Regular workplace
5. Physical hazards

Unit 5: Learn a Foreign or Local Language(s) Including English

Session 1: Importance of Language and Communication

A. Match the Columns

(a) iii (b) i (c) ii

Session 2: Importance of Clear and Concise Communication

A. Correct the Spelling

(a) Signature (b) Boundary (c) Committee
(d) Vacuum (e) Attitude

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Unit 6: Customer-centric Services

Session 1: Dealing with Customers and Assessment of Quality of Service

A. Match the Column

(a) ii (b) iii (c) i (d) iv

Session 2: Working Towards Achieving Customer Satisfaction

State True or False

1. True 2. False 3. True 4. False

Session 3: Fulfilling the Customer's Needs and Requirements

State True or False

1. True 2. False 3. True 4. False

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Notes

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