



Personality Traits

Personnel attributes of housekeeping staff in the hospitality industry play an important role. It enhances the images of the property as well as the quality of personalization that only humans can give. These attributes are based on the following term.

1. Pleasant Personality

A result of good grooming and presentation in front of the guest. The way the staff looks is the first impression on the guest and by this look, the guest judges the quality of service/ standards provided by the organization. All HK staff should be well-groomed.

- Clean Crisp Uniform
- If long hair -Tied neat hair
- Minimum jewelry
- Light makeup
- Aftershave/ Perfume - not too strong
- H/k Attendants may be given Hair caps.
- Clean Footwear- comfortable, low heels
- Mannerisms to avoid- scratching, digging into nose/ ear, chewing gum, etc in public

2. Physical Fitness

"A Strong Heart and Good Feet" to cope up with 24 X 7 operations and also a labor-intensive department

3. Personal hygiene

It is important since it reflects the hygiene standards of the organization.

- Bathe daily- no body odor
- Nails Clipped and clean
- Mouth- Odor free
- Scalp - clean, dandruff free
- Infection- report immediatelyCuts and wounds- covered

4. Eye for detail

The critical power of observation distinguishes good service from average. This is important to make a flawless room.

5. Cooperation

H/k involves a lot of teamwork.

6. Adaptability

Technology is fast upgrading hence all H/k staff should be open to accept these changes and adapt accordingly

7. Honesty

It is essential since it is the H/k staff who have access to the guest rooms even when the guest is not present in the room

8. Tact & Diplomacy

To cope up with the different types of guests since H/k staff come in close contact with them. They should be able to handle problem guests also without being rude or hurting his/ her sentiments.

9. Right Attitude

Includes

- Optimism
- Ready to learn from own mistakes
- Proactive and anticipate guest needs
- The display even temper, courtesy, and good humor.

10. Calm Behavior

Helps in the time of emergencies when a person does not panic and handles the problem effectively.

11. Courteous

To both guests and colleagues.

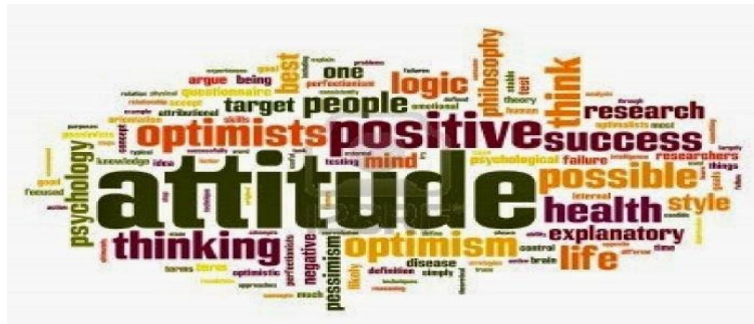
- Humble
- Polite
- No unnecessary argumentative nature.

12. Punctuality

Reporting for duty on time displays commitment to work.

13. Good Memory

Especially in the case of repeat guests. It feels nice if someone remembers the guest likes, dislikes or wish, etc.



COORDINATION OF HOUSEKEEPING WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS

No individual department in any hotel can work in isolation. A willingness to cooperate and coordinate, with the assistance of efficient methods of communication, is essential if the establishment is to run smoothly. The housekeeping department is just one of the departments in a hotel working towards the satisfaction of the guests, and each department is dependent on others for information and/or services if its work is to be accomplished efficiently. Frictions between departments must be kept to a minimum and there should be close inter-departmental liaison.



All departments depicted in the above picture need to coordinate with housekeeping, and vice versa. Within the rooms division, housekeeping primarily coordinates with the front office and maintenance. Amongst all coordination relationships in hotels, the most important one is that between the front office, housekeeping, and maintenance (see Figure). Hotels depend on this triangle to create a perfect image. The ultimate aim of this trio is to provide the guests with a comfortable room and a friendly yet courteous service. This must be provided economically and efficiently because a room that is not sold for a day is loss of revenue that cannot be retrieved.

Coordination with Front Office

Rooms are of chief concern to the front office and housekeeping departments. It is important for the departments to continuously exchange information on room status. The front office must provide lists for expected arrivals and departures for the day in advance, and notify housekeeping of actual arrivals and departures as and when they occur. The front office is not allowed to assign guestrooms until the rooms have been cleaned, inspected, and released by the housekeeping department. Each night, a front office assistant produces an 'occupancy report', also called the 'night report'. This report lists rooms occupied that night and indicates guests who are expected to check out the following day. The executive housekeeper procures and consults this list early the next morning and schedules the occupied rooms for cleaning. As guests check out, the front office notifies housekeeping.

Housekeeping ensures that

these rooms are given top priority in servicing, so that clean rooms are available for sale. If a guest checks out before the stated departure date, the front office must inform housekeeping that the room is no longer a stay over, but is now a check-out. To ensure efficient rooming of guests, both housekeeping and the front office must inform each other of changes in a room's status. Knowing whether a room is occupied, vacant, on change, out of order (OOO), under repair, or similar, is important for proper room management.

A flow of information in the reverse direction is also necessary, especially by way of the 'room status report' or the 'housekeeping status report'. At the end of a shift, the housekeeping department prepares the housekeeping status report, which indicates the physical count as seen by housekeeping, which is to be tallied by the reception board. This report indicates the current housekeeping status of each room. The front office must be informed about rooms that are ready for occupation and those which are out of order or under repair. The room status report is compared with the front office's occupancy report, and discrepancies are brought to the attention of the front office manager.

A room status discrepancy is a situation in which the housekeeping department's description of a room's status differs from the room status information being used by the front office to assign guestrooms. As unoccupied rooms are cleaned and inspected, the floor supervisors call the housekeeping desk attendant, who in turn informs the front office of rooms ready. The front office then updates the room's status to 'vacant and ready'. Promptly informing the front office of the housekeeping status of rooms is a tremendous aid in getting guests who arrive early registered, especially during high- occupancy or sold-out periods.

Keeping room status information up-to-date requires close coordination between the front desk and housekeeping. The two common systems used for tracking current room status are the manual Whitney room-rack systems and the computerized room status systems. The front desk may use a Whitney room rack to track the status of rooms. In this system, a room-rack slip containing the guest's name and other relevant information is prepared during the registration process. This slip is placed in the room- rack slot corresponding to the assigned room number.

The presence of a room-rack slip in the slot indicates that the room is occupied. When the guest checks out, the rack slip is removed and the room's status now indicates 'on change', which means the room is in need of housekeeping services before it can be registered to an arriving guest. Housekeeping meanwhile attends to the unoccupied room and notifies the front desk, which updates the status to 'vacant and ready'.

In a computerized room status system, as soon as a guest checks out, the front desk enters the departure into the computer. This information is received by housekeeping via the computer terminal located in the housekeeping department. When housekeeping is done with the cleaning and inspection of the room, it enters this information into its departmental terminal. This information is received on the front office computer terminal and it puts the room on sale. This system works best when the computer system is directly connected to the guestroom telephone system. With such a network, supervisors can inspect rooms cleaned by attendants and, if they are found

ready for occupancy, enter a code on the guestroom telephone to change the room status to 'cleaned and ready' in the hotel's computer system. Within seconds, the updated room status is displayed on the screen of a front desk computer terminal.

Sharing information on occupancy levels helps forecast occupancy for the year and makes it easier to draw up a budget, establish par stock levels, and estimate required staff strength. It also helps to gear renovations and spring cleaning to low-occupancy periods, thereby preventing loss of revenue.

The housekeeping department also receives other important information from the front office, which require special attention:

VIPs in the house: This information is essential so that the staff can take a little extra care and keener precautions in cleaning and supervising VIP rooms.

Groups in the house: The group rooming list must be provided before the group's arrival as groups tend to move together in terms of arrival, departure, sightseeing tours, and meals. Their rooms need to be readied together in view of strict time parameters. It is also important to intimate room changes, so that items left behind by guests may be handed over, 'extras' retrieved, and laundry delivered. Group rooming lists enable the department to organize their work and have the group's rooms ready on time. This is particularly crucial when the turnover is high and rooms are experiencing back-to-back occupancy.

Crew in the house: Under normal circumstances, airline crews are allotted a given set of rooms on a particular floor. However, sometimes, the arrival of a crew and the departure of another crew from the same airline may overlap. In such circumstances, it is important for the allotted rooms to be cleaned within a short period of time. Also, because of odd timings for international flights, these crew rooms may display a 'do not disturb' (DND) card at times when other guests are normally out, which the housekeeping schedule must take into account.

Flowers: Sometimes the management extends its compliments to a guest with a special gesture of a flower arrangement in the room as recognition of the

importance of a person. This requirement of flower arrangements for certain guests is conveyed to housekeeping by the front office on a daily basis. Apart from the communications mentioned, the front office needs to depend on housekeeping for the provision of clean uniforms to its staff.



Coordination with Maintenance Department

The maintenance department is responsible for the provision of engineering facilities that contribute to the comfort of guests and increase the efficiency of staff. The housekeeping department depends on maintenance to keep things in order. While carrying out their scheduled work, housekeeping employees may find some deficiencies in the hotel facilities, such as faulty electrical plugs, dripping faucets, leaking pipes, or malfunctioning air-conditioning units or water cisterns. The housekeeping department often takes the first steps in maintenance functions for which the maintenance department is ultimately responsible. However, these deficiencies and faults should be immediately reported to maintenance. A need for urgent repairs is reported to maintenance over telephone and these requests are usually dealt with promptly if the rapport between the two departments is good.

There are various heads under which maintenance work is done:

Electrical work: Air conditioning and heating; fused bulbs; lights and lamps that are not functioning; defective plugs and plug points; short circuits; and faulty geysers, refrigerators, and mini bars fall under this category.

Boiler work: This is necessary to maintain a supply of hot water to guestrooms.

Mechanical work: This entails repair or replacement of any faulty equipment, such as vacuum cleaners, ice-cube machines, and so on.

Plumbing work: This deals with faulty faucets, showers, drainage systems, water closets, and so on.

Civil work: Any masonry work comes under this head.

Carpentry work: Broken or shaky furniture, mirrors and cupboards in less than peak condition, and fresh woodwork are all part of this. To look at it another way, in terms of frequency, urgency, and complexity of the job, there are three levels of maintenance work.

Routine maintenance: This involves maintenance activities that relate to the general upkeep of the hotel. They occur on a regular basis, daily or weekly, and require minimal training or skills. These activities do not call for the making out of a formal work order, and no records are maintained for them. Most of these routine maintenance activities are carried out by housekeeping. Proper care of many surfaces and materials by housekeeping personnel is the first step in the overall maintenance programmer for the property. Examples of such activities are the replacement of fused light bulbs, polishing of furniture, cleaning of windows and floors, and so on.

Preventive maintenance: This is a systematic approach to maintenance in which situations are identified and corrected on a regular basis to control costs and keep larger problems from occurring. It involves inspections, minor corrections, and initiation of work orders.

Inspections During the normal course of their duties, housekeeping personnel carry out inspections of most areas. Room attendants and supervisors regularly check for leaking faucets, chipped caulking around bathroom fixtures, fused bulbs, AC malfunctions, and so on.

Minor corrections Problems of a greater magnitude are avoided if minor repairs are attended to promptly. If communication between housekeeping and maintenance is efficient, minor repairs will be rectified by the maintenance department even as the room attendant is cleaning the guestroom.

Initiation of work orders Preventive maintenance sometimes identifies problems that are beyond the limited scope of minor corrections. The necessary work is then referred to the maintenance department through a formal work-order system. The chief maintenance officer or the chief engineer then schedules this maintenance work to be done.

Scheduled maintenance: This involves maintenance work initiated by a work order. Work orders are key elements in the communication and coordination between housekeeping and maintenance.

The procedure for scheduled maintenance is described in this section. The moment a housekeeping personnel detects a problem that requires attention from maintenance, she calls the housekeeping control desk, stating the nature of the problem, the kind of assistance required, and the location where it is required. The control desk fills out a work order form (see Exhibit) in triplicate, each copy being of a different colour. One copy is sent to the executive housekeeper and two copies to maintenance. The chief engineer keeps one of these copies and gives the other to the tradesperson assigned to do the repair. When the job is completed, a copy of the tradesperson's completed work order is sent to the executive housekeeper for acknowledgement of work satisfactorily completed. If this copy is not sent to the executive housekeeper within an appropriate period of time, housekeeping issues another work order, which signals maintenance to provide a status report on the requested repair.

Sample Work Order Form

Hotel XYZ	
MAINTENANCE WORK ORDER FORM	
Time.....Date.....	Check (X) indicates unsatisfactory condition
By.....	Explain Check in remarks section.
Location.....	Bedroom
Problem.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Walls <input type="checkbox"/> Woodwork <input type="checkbox"/> Doors
.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Ceiling <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Light
.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Floors <input type="checkbox"/> AC unit <input type="checkbox"/> Blinds
.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Windows <input type="checkbox"/> Drapes
Assigned to.....	Remarks
Date Comply.....
Time spent.....	Bathroom
Completed by.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Faucets <input type="checkbox"/> Drains <input type="checkbox"/> Shower
Remarks.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Lights <input type="checkbox"/> Wallpapers <input type="checkbox"/> Paints
.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Tiles <input type="checkbox"/> Glass <input type="checkbox"/> Door
.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessories <input type="checkbox"/> Window
.....	Remarks
.....

Nowadays, many hotels install a computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) to catapult them from the strategy colloquially called 'bust n' fix' to one of proactive maintenance.

Engineering and maintenance departments in most hotels keep records of all equipment operated by housekeeping personnel. Equipment data cards contain basic information about these pieces of equipment. The purpose is to provide documentation of all maintenance activity on a given piece of equipment.

On the part of the housekeeping department, its personnel should cooperate with maintenance by getting room doors unlocked promptly when repairs are being done.

Housekeeping should also have maintenance rooms already stripped when redecoration is to take place and should have furniture to be removed for repair appropriately labelled.

Coordination with Security Department

The coordination here is mainly concerned with the prevention of fire and thefts and the safekeeping of keys and lost property. There are so many security hazards on the floors that this liaison is particularly important, and the housekeeper cooperates by endeavoring to see that housekeeping staff are aware of the hazards. Housekeeping personnel should also report anything of a suspicious nature immediately to the security staff. A hotel guestroom should be the most private of places and the hotel staff must ensure their guests' privacy and security. However, a guest may take advantage of this privacy and may be engaged in certain illegal activities such as gambling, smuggling, and so on. Housekeeping personnel have to be alert to this risk and seek the security department's intervention if necessary. The security department is responsible for conducting training sessions on handling emergency situations for the staff. For example, they conduct fire drills to train staff to gear up in a fire emergency.

Coordination with Food and beverage department

The food and beverage (F&B) department consists of both the service staff as well as the kitchen staff. The coordination of housekeeping with the restaurants and banquet halls is mainly concerned with the provision of linen and uniforms. The linen room supervisor, under the supervision of the executive housekeeper, needs to have sufficient stock of clean napery to meet the demands of the F&B department's restaurant and banquet functions. On his/her part, the restaurant manager should ensure that the time set for the exchange of linen is respected; that linen is not lost or misused; and that intimation of forthcoming banquet functions is conveyed to housekeeping well in advance. Besides extra/special linen, housekeeping may also have to arrange for flower decorations for banquets.

Coordination between the two departments becomes particularly necessary in the case of room service, so that friction does not arise over matters such as waiters not collecting trays from guestrooms or room service staff leaving soiled trays in the corridors or causing extra work through careless spills on

the carpet.

In many hotels, housekeeping also looks after pest control in restaurants, kitchens, and stores attached to them. Special cleaning of these areas calls for coordination with the housekeeping department. Both restaurant and kitchen staff require clean uniform on a daily basis, for which too they need to communicate with housekeeping. Provision of staff meals for housekeeping personnel, on the other hand, is the responsibility of the kitchen staff.

Coordination with Stores

Coordination with stores ensures the availability of day-to-day necessities of housekeeping. Larger hotels have a store attached to the housekeeping department that stocks linen, 'supplies, and so on. Smaller hotels may stock them in the general store, except for linen, which is sent to the housekeeping department on purchase. Communication with stores is by way of a requisition form, which housekeeping sends to stores when it requires certain items. The format shown in Exhibit on the next page may be used.

Coordination with Personnel Department

Housekeeping coordinates with the personnel department for recruitment of housekeeping staff; managing their salaries and wages; addressing indiscipline; following through grievance procedures; issuing identity cards for employees; running induction programmes; maintaining locker facilities; completing income tax formalities; effecting transfers, promotions, appraisals, and exit formalities; procuring trainees; and organizing training sessions.

Sample stores requisition form

Hotel XYZ

Date STORES REQUISITION FORM

Items Required on..... Items Indented on.....

S.No	Ledger Folio no	Name of Item	Unit	Stock In hand	Quantity Indented	Quantity Issued	Rate	Amount

Signature of Housekeeper.....

Signature of Storekeeper.....

Sample Purchase requisition form

Hotel XYZ

Date.....

PURCHASE REQUISITION FORM

No. 3456

S.No	Items required	Unit	Quantity	Specification	Cost	Quantity in stock	Reason

Signature of HOD..... Approved by: Finance controller.....

Coordination with Purchase Department

The purchase department procures out-of-stock items for housekeeping, such as guest supplies and amenities, stationery, linen, cleaning materials and equipment, and so on.

Housekeeping should convey their requirements to purchase by way of advance notice in the form of a purchase requisition (Exhibit).

Coordination with Sales and Marketing

The sales and marketing department informs housekeeping of the occupancy forecast for the entire year, which is broken up month wise. This enables housekeeping to budget for the necessary expenses. An important contribution of the housekeeping staff to hotel sales is ensuring that repeat business is obtained by providing the level of cleanliness and service that meets or exceeds guest expectations. The sales and marketing team also have to depend on housekeeping for their uniforms. Two things are certain in the hotel business: no matter how many guests a salesperson brings in the door, if housekeeping does not execute its function with excellence, the guests will not be coming back. Vice versa, no matter how well-kept the rooms, if the sales staff do not bring potential guests to the hotel, occupancy falls.

Coordination with Laundry

This applies when the laundry is under the supervision and control of a laundry manager. Without clean linen, the room attendants simply cannot operate. During periods of full occupancy, the housekeeper needs a fast turnaround of linen from the laundry, but should not always be making an 'emergency' demand for them. As far as possible, the housekeeper should stick to the schedule for the laundry. In return, the laundry should provide an acceptable standard of service with regard to laundering. Housekeeping also needs to coordinate with the laundry with regard to housekeeping employees' uniforms and those of other departments as well.