

Chapter 2

The Housekeeping Department

Introduction:

- ❖ Previously, professional housekeepers learned technical skills related to keeping a clean house.
- ❖ Now, the executive housekeeper and other housekeeping supervisory personnel are not only learning how to do work but also plan, organize, staff, direct and control housekeeping operations.
- ❖ They are learning how to inspire others to accomplish this with a high degree of quality, concern, and commitment to efficiency and cost control.

Objectives:

- ❖ Necessity of planning at all levels.
- ❖ Why it is important that the supervisor/manager's role involve both planning and acting on the plans of others.
- ❖ How policy development and long term planning are important.
- ❖ How proper directing and controlling saves time, energy and resources.
- ❖ How housekeeping needs to coordinate with other departments to get the assigned works accomplished in time.

Planning:

- ❖ The process of planning starts with identification of job role and responsibilities.
- ❖ The organization chart plays a very important role in clarifying the role, reporting hierarchy and the order of delegation.
- ❖ The term planning denotes anticipating several different sets of circumstances for different purposes. Several other key concepts will help explain completely the idea of the planning process.

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Terms used in Planning:

- ❖ **Policies** are general guidelines for dealing with the future. They don't tell what to do, they indicate how to reach a decision.
- ❖ **A plan** is a reasoned means of moving towards some selected goal. A plan reflects policy and may include rules, methods and procedures, standards and budgets.
- ❖ **Procedures** are really a sequential set of rules.
- ❖ **Rules** state what must be done in a given situation.

Terms used in Planning:

- ❖ **Methods** indicate how a standard job is to be done.
- ❖ **Standards** may specify both procedures and outcomes, or a standard may dictate a predetermined figure.
- ❖ **A budget** is a numerical plan, generally expressed in value or in terms of financial counts.
- ❖ **Strategy** concerns long-range basic plans, it is a group of methods used to achieve the goal.
- ❖ **Tactics** are intended to implement the strategy.

As an integral measure the task of planning involves:

- ❖ Setting priorities post the task of goal setting.
- ❖ In the process of setting priorities planning also need staffing and organizing to be carried simultaneously.
- ❖ To analyze the requirement of staffing in an organization, it is very important to demark the organization chart which captures the need of staff at several levels.
- ❖ It should include the flow of command and delegation of responsibilities.

The Executive Housekeeper

- ❖ The executive housekeeper within the hotel organization is one of the main managers within any large hotel.
- ❖ The executive housekeeper or housekeeping manager is normally a high level position within the hotel holding much responsibilities.

Head Housekeeper responsible to Asst. General Manager

Main duties:

- ❖ To comply with all statutory and company regulations relating to the health and safety, hygiene, conduct of employees, fire emergency procedures, security of premises and of the property.
- ❖ To be responsible for cleanliness of all public areas, bedrooms and offices
- ❖ Supervision, training and development of Housekeeping team
- ❖ Smooth operation of Linen Room.

Head Housekeeper responsible to Asst. General Manager

Main duties:

- ❖ Compilation of weekly wage sheets.
- ❖ Liaison with Personnel department with regard to recruitment and disciplinary matters.
- ❖ To ensure correct training of all staff.
- ❖ To maintain correct staffing levels with regard to business.
- ❖ To maintain high level of communication with reception department.
- ❖ To comply with COSHH regulations and to ensure that staff adhere to these regulations.

The housekeeping team:

Staffing vary depending on:

- ❖ Size of operation and area to be cleaned.
- ❖ Quantity of rooms.
- ❖ Standard of hotel.
- ❖ Amount of facilities.
- ❖ Availability of skilled labor.
- ❖ Housekeeping labor budget.

Turndown Service:

Normally carried out around 6.00 pm by chamber maid or evening maid in an occupied room.

Amenities include:

- ❖ Closes curtains or drapes.
- ❖ Dims light.
- ❖ Folds down bed top sheet.
- ❖ Replenishes towels, toiletries and stationary.
- ❖ Places room service breakfast menu on guest pillow.
- ❖ Places complimentary mint or chocolate on the pillow.
- ❖ Places disposable slippers beside the bed.
- ❖ Empties rubbish bins.

Floor Housekeeper/Deputy Executive Housekeeper Job Responsibilities:

- ❖ Check rooms in quality parameters.
- ❖ Check rooms prior to arrival, during occupancy and after departure.
- ❖ Releases clean rooms to reception.
- ❖ Periodic training of employees.
- ❖ Conducts shift briefing.
- ❖ Organize and schedule rooms and suites maintenance.
- ❖ Organize all cleaning chemicals and equipment for their floor each day.

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Floor Housekeeper/Deputy Executive Housekeeper Job Responsibilities:

- ❖ Check rooms and suites which are due out on the day.
- ❖ Handover the shift and all information to evening housekeeper.
- ❖ Communicate any issues with housekeeping office coordinator and senior housekeeper.
- ❖ Organize floor maid service areas.
- ❖ Carry out weekly and monthly stock-take.
- ❖ Check and control room and bathroom amenities stock.

Evening Maid

Job Responsibilities:

- ❖ Completes 'Turndown' service.
- ❖ Deals with customer's requests.
- ❖ Checks availability of amenities.
- ❖ Queries for food/dinner.
- ❖ Arranges for mosquito repellents.
- ❖ Make goodnight call.

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Public Area Cleaner

Job Responsibilities:

- ❖ Clean public areas to include (lobby, lifts, corridors, public toilets, offices and service area)
- ❖ Reports any faults or defects
- ❖ Communicates with customers
- ❖ Make public areas clean and well presented.
- ❖ Restaurants and bars are normally partly cleaned by the outlet staff and partly by public area staff.

Valet

Job Responsibilities:

- ❖ Wash and iron guest laundry items.
- ❖ Send and arrange return of guest dry-cleaning items.
- ❖ Carry out minor guest repairs on customer's laundry.
- ❖ Shoe cleaning.
- ❖ Pressing service.
- ❖ Charge to guest account folio for guest laundry items.
- ❖ Do weekly and monthly stock-take for the valet.
- ❖ Communicate any issues regarding rooms and suites with housekeeping office coordinator and senior housekeeper.

Linen Room Attendant

Job Responsibilities:

- ❖ Send out and receive all staff laundry and dry-cleaning items on a daily basis.
- ❖ Do weekly and monthly stock-takes for the linen room.
- ❖ Organize staff laundry and dry-cleaning of uniforms.
- ❖ Carry out linen repairs.
- ❖ Deliver all linen to the maid service on each floor as per stock levels.
- ❖ Communicate with the linen and laundry room manager and the floor housekeeper.

Laundry Attendants

Job Responsibilities:

- ❖ Wash and iron in-house laundry items.
- ❖ Send and receive in-house dry-cleaning items to departments or external laundry.
- ❖ Separate all types of linen and laundry items before the items are processed.
- ❖ Fold all types of linen and laundry items before delivery back to the floors.
- ❖ Communicate with the linen and laundry room manager and the floor housekeepers.

Night Contract Cleaning

Job Responsibilities:

- ❖ Specialist companies are also used for cleaning duties at night time.
- ❖ It includes general vacuuming of public areas and also more specialized cleaning such as polishing of marble floors within the lobby.
- ❖ Night cleaning is necessary as the cleaning of public areas in depth can be difficult during the day time due to customers being present in the hotel.
- ❖ Night cleaning can be in depth and with minimal noise disturbance to customers.

Special requests

Job Responsibilities:

- ❖ Items that may be requested by customers in addition to the normal services provided. This may include:
- ❖ Roll away beds.
- ❖ Cots.
- ❖ Extra pillows, Blankets or towels.
- ❖ Ironing boards.
- ❖ International mains adaptors.
- ❖ Emergency grooming kits – e.g. Toothpaste, shaver etc.

Directing

In the directing of operations, there are five basic activities:

Delegating: Assigning responsibility and exacting accountability for results.

Motivating: Persuading and inspiring people to take a desired action.

Coordinating: relating efforts in the most efficient combination.

Managing differences: Encouraging independent thought and resolving conflict.

Managing change: Stimulating creativity and innovation in achieving goals.

Controlling

In the controlling of operations, there are five basic activities:

Establishing a reporting system: Determining what critical data are needed.

Developing performance standards: Setting conditions that will exist when key duties are well done.

Measuring results: Ascertaining the extent of deviation from goals and standards.

Taking corrective action: Adjusting plans.

Rewarding: Praising, remunerating or administering discipline.

Evening Activities (6.00 P.M. to Midnight)

- ❖ Transcribe the Housekeeper report and then up date the report.
- ❖ To transcribe the remaining checkouts to the Night Supervisor's Report of Evening Activities and the night GRA to begin cleaning these checkouts.
- ❖ Public area housekeepers to clean Public area.
- ❖ Evening crew to provide special services as requested by the guest.
- ❖ Turndowns are begun at about 7.00 pm and are continued until completed.

Evening Activities (6.00 P.M. to Midnight)

Codes used in night (P.M.)reports are:

- ❖ R Ready
- ❖ C/O... Checkout
- ❖ T Tidy
- ❖ MR ... Made ready
- ❖ OCC.. Occupied
- ❖ RET .. Returned
- ❖ COMP.Completed
- ❖ STAT .. Status

Evening Activities (6.00 P.M. to Midnight)

- ❖ At the end of the shift, the housekeeping department prepares a housekeeping status report, based on physical check of each room.
- ❖ The report indicates the current housekeeping status of each room and is compared with the front office occupancy report, and any discrepancies 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 status information being used by the Front Desk to assign guestrooms.

Liaison 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 department working towards the satisfaction of the guests and each department is dependent on others for information if its work is to be accomplished efficiently.
- ❖ Frictions must be kept to a minimum.

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.
- ❖ The front office is not allowed to assign guestrooms until the rooms have been cleaned and released by housekeeping department.

Coordination with Front Office

- ❖ In a computerized room status system as soon as a guest checks out the front desk enter the departure into the computer.
- ❖ This information is received by housekeeping via computer terminal.
- ❖ 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 and it puts room on sale.

Flowers:

- ❖ Sometimes the management extends its compliments to a guest with a special gesture of a flower arrangement in a room as recognition of the importance of a person.
- ❖ This requirement of flower arrangements for creating guest is conveyed to housekeeping by the front office on a daily basis apart from the above communications.
- ❖ The front office needs to depend on housekeeping for the provision of clean uniform to its staff.

Coordination with Maintenance Department:

- ❖ The maintenance department is responsible for the provision of engineering facilities.
- ❖ The housekeeping department depends on maintenance to keep things in order.
- ❖ The housekeeping often takes the fast steps in maintenance function for which the maintenance dept is ultimately responsible.
- ❖ A need for urgent repairs is reported to maintenance over telephone, these requests are dealt promptly.

Coordination with Maintenance Department:

Maintenance work is done in different heads:

- ❖ Electrical work.
- ❖ Boiler work.
- ❖ Mechanical work.
- ❖ Plumbing work.
- ❖ Civil work.
- ❖ Carpentry 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 don't 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.

Preventive maintenance:

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

Schedule maintenance:

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

Coordination with Food and Beverage Department

- ❖ F&B department consists of both the service staff and the kitchen staff.
- ❖ The coordination of housekeeping with the restaurant and banquet halls is mainly concerned with the provision of linen and uniforms.
- ❖ The linen room supervisor, need to have sufficient stock of clean napery to meet the demands of the F&B.
- ❖ The restaurant manager should ensure the time set for exchange of linen, and that the intimation of forthcoming banquet functions is conveyed to housekeeping well in advance.

Coordination with Food and Beverage Department

- ❖ In many hotels, housekeeping department also looks after pest control in restaurants, kitchen and stores attached to them.
- ❖ Special cleaning of these areas call for coordination with housekeeping department.
- ❖ Provision of staff meals for housekeeping personnel is the responsibility of the kitchen staff.

Coordination with Security Department

- ❖ Coordination is mainly concerned with the prevention of fire and thefts and the safe keeping of keys and lost property.
- ❖ A hotel guest room should be the most private of places and the hotel staff must ensure their guest's security and privacy.
- ❖ 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 seek security dept's intervention.

Coordination with Sales and marketing

- ❖ The sales and marketing team also have to depend on housekeeping for their uniforms.
- ❖ Two things are certain in hotel business: no matter how many guests a sales person brings in the door, if housekeeping does not execute its function with excellence, the guests will not come back.
- ❖ Vice versa, no matter how well-kept the room, if the sales staff don't bring potential guests to 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 the periods of full occupancy, the housekeeper should stick to the schedule for the laundry.
- ❖ Housekeeping also needs to coordinate with regard to housekeeping employees uniforms and those of other departments as well.