

THE ROLE OF ENGLISH COMMUNICATION SKILL FOR THE GUEST SERVICE OFFICERS IN HANDLING THE FOREIGN GUESTS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF HUMAN RESOURCE AT A HOTEL

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ABSTRACT

The title of the research aims to know the role of English Communication Skill for the Guest Service Officers in handling the foreign guests to improve the quality of human resource at a hotel. In this research, the writer used a descriptive method through literature study by collecting some data taken from relevant books or websites. The result of research shows that English communication is really required for the guest service officers because they are the first people in a hotel who should communicate with the guests, including the foreign guests. When the foreign guests come, the guest service officers must use an international language. That is English. It is a must for them to be able to speak English. Last but not least, the writer suggests that the hotels should give the special training for the guest service officers. Therefore, they will feel more confident when they have to face the foreign guests. Indirectly, that English training can improve the quality of human resource that can make the image of hotel better and better.

Keywords: *Guest Service Officers, English Communication Skill*

ABSTRAK

Judul penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui peran Keterampilan Komunikasi Bahasa Inggris untuk Petugas Layanan Tamu dalam menangani tamu asing untuk meningkatkan kualitas sumber daya manusia di sebuah hotel. Dalam penelitian ini, penulis menggunakan metode deskriptif melalui studi literatur dengan mengumpulkan beberapa data yang diambil dari buku atau situs web yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi bahasa Inggris sangat diperlukan untuk petugas layanan tamu karena mereka adalah orang pertama di hotel yang harus berkomunikasi dengan para tamu, termasuk para tamu asing. Ketika tamu asing datang, petugas layanan tamu harus menggunakan bahasa internasional. Itu bahasa Inggris. Merupakan keharusan bagi mereka untuk dapat berbicara bahasa Inggris. Terakhir, penulis menyarankan bahwa hotel harus memberikan pelatihan khusus untuk petugas layanan tamu. Karena itu, mereka akan merasa lebih percaya diri ketika harus menghadapi tamu asing. Secara tidak langsung, bahwa pelatihan bahasa Inggris dapat meningkatkan kualitas sumber daya manusia yang dapat membuat citra hotel menjadi lebih baik dan lebih baik.

Kata kunci: Petugas Layanan Tamu, Keterampilan Komunikasi Bahasa Inggris

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a tropical country that has natural resources and cultures that are potential in the world of tourism industry. Tourism management can progress rapidly if it is supported with adequate facilities and infrastructures. Facilities and infrastructures are very important in the accommodation. Accommodation is the place to stay or a temporary residence for people who are traveling.

Economic growth in Indonesia is increasing. One area that is potentially present is Bandung. For example, today many founding hotels, restaurants and other places have been or are on progress. Therefore, as the company which runs in the hospitality, a hotel demands the participation and the ability to fill the high level of people's desire in services of accommodation. Many existing hotels make the hospitality industry in Indonesia have to work extra to survive, because each hotel should compete to provide good services and facilities to the visitors. Some hotels in Bandung must upgrade everything in their hotels.

A trip advisor is a site that provides information on tourist attractions, and hotels in particular somewhere along the various reviews are written travelers. The written reviews are reliable because the information is not of this site, but the traveler who has visited the place. This site is very helpful at all Guest Service Officers in shaping the relationship between guests at the hotel, but it will be bad too if their impression is unfavorable that is written by a guest, so it will indirectly affect the quality of service and public confidence in the hotel product itself.

The Hotels in Bandung must strive to provide good services, quality and

satisfaction for guests and apply the values of service quality to their employees. Every employee needs for the arm with the values of service quality in order to increase guest loyalty, so that employees are as internal public. The Hotels in Bandung can apply when they relate to public hotel, both internal and external public. It is required the effort and the role of communication from Guest Service Department to relate well with everyone. Guest Service Department is an occupation which is very influential in providing services to the guests, its officers are required to perform the duties and responsibilities for operational activities take place, in addition to interacting with the guests as for the duties and responsibilities undertaken by Guest Service Department.

Guest Service Department prepares what the guests need, handles whatever the desires of guests and a few other tasks associated with daily activities that are multi-skill, for example changing the status of the rooms in general which is carried out by a team of Housekeeping, but at most of the Hotels it was done by a team of guest Service Department, then handling booking or reservation when working hours reservation team ends because the team of Guest Service Department always helps the team reservation in handling room bookings received.

Guest Service Officers who work in the evening or night shifts serve as a telephone operator. Telephone operator team working hours are only until 23:00 pm and then all incoming calls will be forwarded and handled by Guest Service Department. Therefore, Guest Service Department should provide sufficient knowledge and ensure that the daily operations should go well and the service provided must be satisfying. Then the lack of human resources at the Guest Service Department

is the constraint on operational day. It proves when the occupancy room is high. Guest Service Officer cannot take the annual leave or extra day off because they must be responsible for their jobs.

Guest Service Department can also be interpreted as the bridge between companies with a very strategic role. Guest Service Department should reflect the values of the company. Remember that right now there are many hotels in Bandung built and the company must be careful and take care of the guests until they are satisfied about their products and services. From the previous background, the writer wants to see the extent of service performed by Guest Service Department in the form of journal focusing on the **"The role of English Communication Skill for the Guest Service Officers in Handling the Foreign Guests to Improve The Quality of Human Resource at a Hotel."**

METHODOLOGY

1. Communication

Communication skill plays an important role in all aspects of business, especially for those whose jobs are at the front office facing many kinds of people with different education and cultural background. Through the communication skill, they can build and maintain relations. Particularly, receptionists who are positioned at the front offices. If a guest goes to the hotels, he can meet some boys and girls in the front offices. They are good-looking and friendly. They are called the Guest Service Officers. They communicate with the guests nicely and friendly. Of course, they are trained by some experienced communication experts invited by hotel managements in advance. They are given the special education of communicating with the guests. One of the

aims is to make the guests feel comfortable. If the guests feel comfortable, the guests will tell both their friends and relatives later. This is one of the ways to market the hotel. Besides, the employees must have the computer skill. This skill really supports their performance. It is not necessary for them to do their jobs manually.

The essence of communication is: "The process of inter-human statement which stated it was thought, feeling one person to another by using language as a tool distributors" (Effendy, 1993: 28).

However, according to Schramm communication is etymologically derived from the Latin word "communication" which means "common" (a general nature, the same at a together). But its verb "communicare" means meaningful dialogue, negotiate or deliberation. So, communication occurs when there is a similarity of meaning about a message sent by the sender and received by the communicant.

Understanding such communication is very limited, because communication involves many stages, so that nature is not static but dynamic, i.e. moving or evolving from one stage to another, because it is a communication activity called a process communication. Communication also refers to the action, either by one person or more, which sends and receives messages that are distorted by interference (noise) that occurs in a particular context, it has an affect and there is an opportunity for get a feedback (DeVito, 1997: 23). From the various definitions, there are three aspects to be considered in communication activities, they are that communication should be viewed as a process, regarding aspects of human and nonhuman and aspects of information or testimony, of all things that have meaning and usefulness

a. Communication Functions

Described by Somad and Priansa (117: 2014) Communications have a strategic functions, they are mentioned as follows:

1) Information

Communication serves to collect and store data, facts and messages and opinions so that people can know the situation. For example if there is a promotion in the hotel so sales team will send an information to the guest by email.

2) Socialization

Communications also serves as a socializing tool that allows people to interact with each other. With effective communication, the process of socialization that occurs will be easier. For example the Public Relation Manager comes to the market to explain about what the things that they can do in the hotel.

3) Motivation

Communications also serves as a motivation that drives a person to behave in particular. With good communication, the person will be well motivated anyway. For example, the General Manager gives a motivation by telling about his experience start from he was nothing becomes something.

4) Education

Communication also is functioning as a medium of education, where individuals

will grow and develop through the construction of communication networks. This means that a good education is built through good communication. For example we can get a knowledge and know a culture because we ask the people who involve in this.

5) Culture

Communication serves to advance the culture. For example, the communications media in the form of mass media, where social media publish a diversity of cultural products. For example communication teaches us how to know the other culture through communication with a new people and ask everything they do's and don't's.

6) Entertainment

Communication is also one of entertainment media that is important to the individual. Through pleasant communication, the individual should be comforted. For example when we watch a movie and we feel sad, happy or fun because it delivers to our heart.

7) Integration

Communication creates integration, means of communication is able to bridge the differences that are owned by one individual to another individual. For example even we are

different of religion but we can tolerate each other when we can do pray and what the things that we cannot do so it can make us respect each other.

8) Innovation

Communication also leads to the birth of innovation, where it is present for their innovation needs and demands of the people to create an effective communication system without being limited space and time. For example by communication we will know what the things new and we make something new also for always be an advance.

b. Purpose of Communication

According to Rosmawaty (2010: 30), there are several opinions about the communication objectives, they are as follows:

1) The first opinion, the purpose of communication is to change attitudes, the opinions or views, changing behavior, and the community. Through the culture it can influence the process by which one perceives a reality. All communities in all places always manifest or bring in what is their view of reality through culture. Conversely, communication helps us in the creation of the cultural reality of a community.

2) The second opinion, the purpose of communication is to

ensure that the message is understandable, to make sure that the message is effective according to our expectations, to ensure that the message is feasible. To be a good communicator, there are some things to be understood that a good communicator needs to prepare well the contents of messages to be delivered, so the message is easily understood by the receiving party. The best communicators also need to know which media are most appropriate to send a message to the recipient and must know how to anticipate disturbances that will appear in the message delivery process. In addition, a good communicator will be responsible to respond to feedback given by the receiver.

3) The third opinion for the purpose of communication is to inform persuasive argumentative and entertaining. Communication decodes our surroundings, keeps an eye on the possibility of danger, and watches the effect of the agreement and also entertainment. Mass communication interprets things to be decoded in order to take policy to the effect, keeps the ongoing interaction and helps members of the public to enjoy life. Mass communication also encodes messages that nurture our relationships with other people and submits a new culture to members of the public. This opportunity is made possible because mass communication has the ability to expand the view, hearing in the distance is virtually unlimited, and it can multiply the voice and words widely.

c. Definition of Guest Service Officers

Guest service officer is derived from the English "guest" which means a "service", which means care and "officer" means the officer. So it can be interpreted that the Guest Service Officer is an officer who greets and serves guests when they come to the hotel, helps guests in the process of check-in and check-out. The services become the first impression for the guests. Moreover, a Guest Service Officer should provide information in connection with the services and facilities of the hotel. According to Renner in the book titled *Basic Hotel Front Office Procedures* states that: "The first contact with the hotel personnel may be a doorman or bellman, but most likely, it will be a Desk Clerk. He is the prime representative of the hotel, the management and all other employees working for it. The first impression will make all the difference in how the guests will view the hotel and subsequently enjoy reviews their stay. They will then make the establishment.

From the previous opinion, a doorman or bellman is the first person to relate to guests, but what often happens is related to a Desk Clerk (Guest Service Officer) for Guest Service Officer is the main representative of the hotel or management. First impressions will affect the view of the hotel guests to enjoy the visit or stay in the hotel. Therefore a guest service

officer should give a good first impression so that guests can feel the expectation to expect that will minimize the occurrence of guest complaint.

The reception at the front office has a lot of terms or designations. There are called Front Desk Agent, Guest Service officer, Guest Service Agent or Receptionist. According Sambodo and Bagyono (2006: 41) the front office is one of the most important parts that it must absolutely be there in a hotel organization. The front office should normally be located on the front of the hotel building for easy viewing and obtained by the guests. As noted by Martin in his book entitled *Human Relations for the Hospitality Industry*. It states that:

"The front desk of a hotel or motel is usually the primary next us between the guest and the hotel or motel. The person working the front desk, whatever the job title-front desk clerk, receptionist, guest service agent-is a person who registers and checks the guest in and out, keeps records by hand or computer, relates to the housekeeping and other departments, and generally operates an information and record center ".

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Organizational Structure of Hotel

The organizational structure shows a level of hierarchy, where the organizational structure can be seen the relationship between parts to one another, superior and subordinate relationships. By showing the structure of the organization, everyone can know the duties, powers, and responsibilities of each. It will also facilitate the leadership to conduct

oversight and accountability for tasks that have been in charge. The organizational structure is designed according to the needs of the hotel, bigger and full of amenities, the organizational structure is also more complex. The following are the responsibilities of each position at a hotel:

a. General Manager

The GM is responsible for :

- 1) leading, managing and controlling all activities of the company to be in able to service standards that have been set to achieve the target revenues and expenses in accordance with the operational budget,
- 2) providing information to the manager who approves all subordinates regarding the company's policies and amendments, and
- 3) monitoring and evaluating the activities carried out by each department in the company.

b. Room Division Manager

RDM is responsible for:

- 1) everything relating to the hotel room,
- 2) overseeing all staffs at Room Division Management including directing and dividing tasks, and
- 3) coordinating with Front Office and Housekeeping or related department regarding the hotel operations.

c. Front Office Manager

FOM is responsible for:

- 1) selecting, placing, training and evaluating Front Office employees,
- 2) coordinating and controlling regarding the facilities and services of each reception VIP, government officials, leaders of

foreign countries and representatives of state guests to ensure their satisfaction,

- 3) making annual budget, analyzing operations and hotel revenue on a daily basis in terms of revenue and average room rates (average room rate), and

- 4) making a monthly report on the guest list, the occupancy rate, profit or loss section of the front office.

d. Duty Manager

DM is responsible for:

- 1) providing information and handling guest complaints that occur in every duty,
- 2) controlling the activities of all employees on duty hours, and
- 3) every decision because at that time the company gives the authority for decision-making that is submitted to it.

e. Chief Guest Service Officer

CGSO is responsible for:

- 1) making sure that hotel operation at the department runs well. For example if there are many guests queuing up at the counter, she must help and cover Guest Service Officer,
- 2) coordinating with each department daily. For example, if the guests comes, they want to check in, she must report to Housekeeping team that they must clean the rooms quickly,
- 3) administering and controlling all the guests need. For example, if there is a guest who is going to have honeymoon, she must prepare all the things to make the guest room more beautiful than usual. She must

- put a hand bouquet of flower and chocolate praline as a gift on the table, and
- 4) monitoring the activity of Senior Guest Service Officer and Guest Service Officer to prevent from problems.
- f. Senior Guest Service Officer.
SGSO is responsible for:
- 1) creating a work schedule Guest Service Officer,
 - 2) accommodating problems that occur to take steps of its solution immediately. For example, if there is a staff who cannot work, she must be able to replace him/her,
 - 3) discussing the work plan and completing the unfinished work. For example, if there is a staff who is in trouble and he/she must go home urgently, SGSO must help him/her to finish his/her work, and
 - 4) holding the training programs for subordinates.
- g. Guest Service Officer
GSO is responsible for:
- 1) coordinating with other departments regarding the needs of guests,
 - 2) overcoming the troubleshooting related to the products and the services of the hotel,
 - 3) knowing the price of the rooms and hotel facilities very well,
 - 4) handling the check in and check out as well as the payment process, and
 - 5) providing information about the activities both inside and outside the hotel.

2. The Types of Room at a five star hotel

The following are the rooms we can see at a five star hotel:

- a. Deluxe Room
- b. Deluxe Pool View
- c. Deluxe Balcony
- d. Deluxe Balcony Pool View
- e. Premier Room
- f. Premier Room Mountain View
- g. Hillside Room
- h. Gallery Suite
- i. Premier Suite

3. The Supporting Facilities

A five star hotel provides some supporting facilities in it. Those facilities are a means to assist some activities. Those supporting facilities are as follows:

- a. The Lobby
- b. The Restaurant and Lounge
- c. Room Service
- d. Swimming Pool
- e. Entertainment Room
- f. Outbound Area
- g. Fitness Center Area
- h. Spa
- i. Business Center
- j. Butler Service
- k. Wedding Chapel
- l. Meeting Room

4. The Common Obstacles that Occur in Guest Service Department

In every business industry, the obstacles often occur. They must be overcome soon. Solution must be found. Based on the results of the interviews, the following are some obstacles that occur:

- a. Lack of Human Resources at the Guest Service Department at a Hotel

Because of the lack of human resource in this department, when the occupancy rates are high, the

guests should wait for the service of Guest Service Department. Furthermore, Guest Service Department should handle all kinds of the job. For instance, bookings should be received and processed, incoming calls should be answered, including other jobs which are actually not the Guest Service Department's duties.

In this case the Guest Service Department must work extra to make an optimal job. The lack of human resources at the Guest Service Department makes Guest Service Officer be in trouble to take a day off for extra rations or public holidays which is the right of every employee to enjoy time outside of working hours.

b. Lack of Supporting Working Facility in Guest Service Department at a hotel

This has an impact on work effectiveness and efficiency of time. For example, hotel computer systems are still the old version. A five-star hotel should use the new version of computer. There are usually only two computers at the counter. Therefore, the key card system must be encoded without being connected to the system of hotel computers. Besides, there is only a meter lock maker, so either the guest's passports or the guest's name cards are manually written and made by Guest Service Officer. There are still some incomplete supporting working tools, like banknote counting machines, scanners, photo copy machine on, and filing cabinets.

5. The Efforts Carried Out by the Guest Service Department in Overcoming the Obstacles

- a. Regarding the lack of human resource at the Guest Service Department, this is related to the number of staffs consisting of four officers. They are a senior and a chief Guest Service Officer. The management does not plan to add. So, to overcome this condition, Guest Service Department is assisted by the operational Butler and Guest Relations coordinator. The Front Office Manager and their assistants should also participate in the daily operations. Then, the extra day off, public holidays and vacation compensation, as the employees' right, can be coordinated and arranged when occupancy rates are down.
- b. Management of hotel always tries to find the working devices one by one. Usually, The number of computers was limited. Therefore, laptops were provided to assist operations at the counter. The stationary tools were added, such as the cash. The guests' passport used an ordering system, so the Guest Service Department did not need to make it manually at the time. The photo copy machine used by Guest Service Department was the photo copy machine in the executive office. The document holders and box files were stored in the cupboard.

6. The Prospect

Guest Service Department will certainly face many obstacles and it must know how to overcome them. Actually,

Guest Service Department can do the best but if this department wants to do something, this department can decide by itself. This department must be acknowledged by Manager. The Guest Service Department can upgrade higher level of rooms if the guests complain about the rooms. Maybe, the guests also want to change the rooms. The guests can be given a complimentary. For example, They are given 2 packs for free dinner, voucher one night. If unpredictably there is a snake inside the room, Guest Service Department can give a voucher of free stay to make the guests happy. Besides, Guest Service Department can prevent problem happened by telling the other departments through an email if there are special guests or VIP guests.

Guest Service Department can prevent the guests' complaint on social media by asking the guests whether or not they feel comfortable to stay in that room. Coming to the restaurant during dinner or breakfast is a good way to know about the feedbacks. The guests are asked about what they need and want to be provided.

D. CONCLUSION

After describing all in the previous chapters, the writer concludes that the services given by Service Department to the guests are not good enough. Some obstacles inhibiting the problem of service are lack of human resources. Guest Service Department (GSD) should handle some jobs which are actually not the real jobs at GSD. GSD should be good at making decisions to overcome the unpredictable problems that can inhibit the smoothness of the duties at GSD. Besides, lack of supporting working facility has become an obstacle at GSD. For example, the

computer system which is out of date. It should have been reinstalled with the more sophisticated computer system that can make all the jobs run smoothly.

GSD has tried to minimize some problems above by proposing several things to the management. GSD has coordinated with some departments to overcome the unpredictable problems both inside and outside the hotels related to the services given to the guests. Minimizing the guests' complaints, Guest Service Officer visits some places directly to see whether or not they feel satisfied about the services.

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