

## Attributes of Front Office Staff

Guests remain in direct contact with the front office staff throughout their stay at the hotel. As the front office personnel are the first and the last point of contact with the guests, they reflect the image of the hotel, and hence should carry themselves and behave in a way befitting the vision of the organization. The front office personnel must possess various qualities to perform their duties efficiently. These are:



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#### 1. Pleasant personality

Front desk employee is the first person with whom a guest comes in contact. The guest starts building the image of the hotel from the physical appearance and personality of the front office personnel. The gestures grooming and personal presentation of a front desk employee are very important in leaving a good impression in the mind of the guest. The front desk personnel should be well turned out; they should have a pleasant personality, greeting guests with a smiling face and showing interest in their concerns.

#### 2. Personal hygiene

The front desk employees should follow the highest standards of personal hygiene. They are in direct contact with guests throughout the day. A good sense of personal hygiene is imperative for front desk employees as their appearance influences the guests' image of the hotel. As guests check into a hotel, at any point of the day they would be in touch with the front desk, hence, the staff need to look their best at all times.

**3. Physical fitness**

It is important for front desk personnel to be physically fit as they have to be constantly on their feet during their long working hours. During peak business time or shortage of staff, they may have to work for a longer duration. The bell desk personnel and sometimes the front desk staff have to perform tasks such as lifting and shifting guest luggage and parcels.

**4. Honesty**

The front office employees should be honest and trustworthy. They should not succumb to the temptations that may arise during the day-to-day working of the department. Honest employees are an asset to an organization and leave a good impression of the hotel in the mind of guests.

**5. Salesmanship**

Front desk personnel should possess the quality of salesmanship. There are many instances when they can push slow-moving services or products of the hotel. If the room category desired by a guest is not available, they can suggest the guest to book a room of higher rate category rather than rejecting the reservation request. They can motivate guests to increase their length of stay by informing them about the nearby places of interest or upcoming events and shows. They should be equipped with complete knowledge about the hotel and its facilities, as well as the happenings in the city.

**6. Diplomacy**

It is the typical characteristic needed in front desk personnel. They should be diplomatic while attending to any problem that a guest might have with the hotel and its services. If the front desk personnel have to reject a request for a room booking due to unavailability, they should do so cordially and diplomatically. There may be situations when due to overbooking the hotel may not be in a position to assign rooms to guests in spite of them having a confirmed reservation, the front desk employees should deal with such situations diplomatically, without upsetting or offending the guests.

**7. Good memory**

It's important for the front desk employees to have a good memory guests like to be recognized by the hotel staff and addressed by their names on their repeat visits to the hotel. A sharp memory will help the front office staff remember and respond to the reservation requests and special preferences of guests. Guests appreciate it if their preferences are kept in mind while extending them various services, such as allotting a room of their choice in (non-smoking area, away from elevator, or on a quiet floor).

**8. Good communication skills**

The front office personnel must possess excellent communication skills as they interact with guests at the time of their arrival, stay, and departure. They should be confident and polite as well as clear and precise in the communication. They should be proficient in English (or any other widely spoken language), the knowledge of a foreign language is an added advantage.

**9. Calmness**

The front office personnel should be able to remain calm and composed in high-pressure situations. There will be many situations when a guest might be unsatisfied and angry due to some problem in the services or products offered to the guest by the hotel, for example, the room rate confirmed to the guest at the time of reservation could be lower than the rate being charged at the time of check-out. The calmness and patience of the front desk personnel in such situations will help to diffuse the tension, resolve the problem, and win the guest's faith and loyalty.

**10. Courteousness**

It is important that while interacting with guests, the front desk personnel should be courteous and polite. They should never argue with a guest. In case they are unable to resolve any guest problem, they should involve their immediate superior. A smooth resolution of problems teamed with the courteous behaviour of the hotel staff will lead to goodwill among guests.

**11. Loyalty**

The front desk personnel should be loyal to their job as well as to the management and the organization. Loyalty instils a sense of belongings among employees, which reflects in their interactions with guests.

**12. Punctuality**

The front desk employees should be punctual in reporting for their shifts, as well as in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities. The punctuality of employees reflects their commitment to the work.

Hence, Front office staff are the ambassadors of the hotel and need to be at their best at all times of the day.