

4. Front Office – Ranks and Responsibilities

Let us discuss a few prominent ranks in the front office department and their respective responsibilities:

Reservation Manager

In the context of hotel, the term reservation is used for booking a particular accommodation in the hotel by a guest for a period of time. Reservation section does not directly deal with the guests.



Some important tasks a reservation manager is responsible for are:

- Having knowledge about the reservation systems.
- Providing and updating information on tours, prices, and itineraries.

- Reviewing daily hotel reservations.
- Preparing occupancy forecast.
- Updating travel agent rates in the system.
- Handling correspondence with outside travel agencies.
- Allocating daily tasks to the reservation staff.
- Ensuring special deals with repeat guests, VIPs, or guest groups.
- Training the staff under hand.

Reception Manager

Following are some prominent roles and responsibilities of the reception manager:

- Dealing with arrival and departure of the guests.
- Welcoming the guests, escorting them to the room, and seeing them off.
- Ensuring professional greeting of clients, visitors, and guests.
- Coordination with housekeeping department for cleaning rooms.
- Filling registration cards for the guests with reserved accommodation or help the guests to fill it up.
- Arranging surprise gift for the guests on their special days.
- Training of receptionists.
- Handling appraisals and performance rewards of the staff.
- Reviewing current standards of front office services and procedures, and implementing new practices if required.
- Ensuring and Scheduling front office desk staff.
- Managing VIP functions and events taking place in the hotel.
- Upgrading software if required.
- Updating backup database regularly.



Guest Services Manager

The responsibilities of the guest service manager include:

- Handling guest mails, letters, and couriers.
- Ensuring guest messages are delivered at the right time.
- Training the guest service staff such as concierges, bell staff, wallet parking staff, and porters.
- Maintaining guest service suggestion cards and guest complaints.
- Scheduling and appraising guest service staff.
- Ensuring the staff delivers services, accurately and timely.



Night Audit Manager

This manager works during the night hours. The typical responsibilities of a night audit manager are:

- Posting accommodation charges, taxes, and other paid services such as restaurant, Internet charges to each guest's account accurately.
- Taking the responsibility as a duty manager for night shift.
- Settling guest accounts if required.
- Authoring security of the hotel during night shift.



Communication Manager

The communication manager is responsible for:

- Keeping in check all communication facilities such as PBX, facsimile, internet in the hotel.
- Training and scheduling telephone operators in case of large hotels.
- Ensuring immediate delivery of fax to the guests, if required.
- Appraising telephone operators.
- Changing the communication systems to the latest technology for easy use.



Front Office – Staff Qualities and Competencies

Being a part of the service industry, the front office staff needs to have the following qualities and competencies. The front office staff members are required to:

- Understand their respective roles and responsibilities in the hotel and front office as an operation.
- Equip themselves with basic etiquettes and mannerism.
- Possess pleasant, polite, and cordial personality.
- Wear clean and neat uniform with same accessories and footwear.
- Conduct themselves with professionalism, positive attitude, and cooperative nature.
- Possess extraordinary communication skills.
- Be a team player.
- Possess the ability to tackle tricky situations.