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Benefits of Creating Sub-Committees on Hotel Properties | By Adam Zembruski

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Background

The term "guru" has been used and possibly overused in all industries. Though, don't let the cliché tag cloud your vision of what the term truly means. Religious meanings aside, a guru is a leader in a particular field. When people need answers, they seek gurus of all types, i.e. Doctors, Attorneys, Professors, etc.



Large hotel corporations, ownership and management companies have "committees" that are charged with researching, presenting and making recommendations to executive leadership, i.e. Compensation Committee, Investment Committee, etc. The committees are filled with gurus.

A hotel runs similarly to any corporation; each with a leader (GM), department heads, supervisors, and line level employees. So, why shouldn't every hotel have "committees" just like the corporation that owns or manages the hotel?

The Need

General Managers have many "customers", all of which have expectations and the GM is charged with meeting or exceeding every one of them. These customers are Brand reps, Management Company support teams, direct supervisors, asset managers, employees, quality assurance reps, individual guests, online communities and review sites, large room-night generating clients, health/fire/building inspectors, community and political leaders, and several more.

The GM can NOT meet or exceed the expectations of all of these customers without a lot of help and involvement from the people on property. Along with producing an immense value, committees will develop employees, create synergies, align the interests of team members and give birth to several "gurus" that can help the hotel achieve what was previously viewed as impossible or extremely difficult.

Examples of Committees

Take for example the budget "season". Many Sales Directors and GMs close the door during budgeting season. Open up that door and invite a **Budgeting Committee** to share the load. Give them the direct task of researching ways the housekeeping or food and beverage department can work more efficiently and become more profitable, and ask them to detail the results month by month for the next year. You will be amazed with the results. Not only will you have a blueprint for higher profitability, you will have created synergies within your hotel that can last for years.

Another example would be a **Q.A.-Ready Every Day Committee**. This committee can meet for one hour per week to discuss 4 or 5 Quality Assurance issues and is empowered to implement solutions. This will eliminate last minute, frenetic preparations when a brand Q.A. review/exam is imminent, reducing stress for everyone and creating a healthy balance and operating finesse.

Also consider a **Continuous Improvement Committee**. This committee simply observes a particular task, such as cleaning a guestroom bathroom, and then reports the findings and makes

recommendations to the Housekeeping Manager that can improve efficiencies, make the housekeeper happier or save a few dollars.

None of these examples involve the General Manager. The GM is there to simply listen to recommendations and make final decisions if needed. The GM should offer full empowerment to these committees. Even if a particular committee makes no implementable recommendations, then you're still coming out on top, because the team is working together, creating memories and developing themselves into lifetime hoteliers.

How to start a committee?

Simple, but the GM needs to be willing to let go. The first step is to identify one of your best employees, one that is always willing to help, has a great attitude and has expressed an interest in doing more. Task this person with starting the first committee. Give that person the title such as Budgeting Committee Chairperson and then give them the first task, suggest a deadline for its first recommendation, **let go** and watch the miracle happen.

Letting go is often difficult for most General Managers because the best GMs are "hands on". Just try it. The committees are forever evolving. If the GM consistently empowers the committees, they will eventually act independently without supervision or direction, allowing the GM to focus on exceeding the expectations of his many customers, only now he is doing it with an army behind him.

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