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## Essay: Housekeeping

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### CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Housekeeping can be looked at as the navel of the lodging operation. All forms of lodging associations around the world can flourish without swimming pools, banquets, ballrooms or even food service areas but without a properly guided housekeeping wing no inn, motel or hotel would thrive irrespective of how big, popular or clean they may be.

According to Craig Hunt, a young (24 years) yet successful and experienced housekeeping manager, 'housekeepers are victors and housekeeping is the most difficult job in the entire lodging establishment'. It is indeed a sustained fight for the staff members who have to tidy up after the guests and the EHK who has to

keep the staff motivated at all points of time.

The two primary duties of the housekeeping sector are safeguarding the investment made by the owner in the construction of the establishment and provision of clean and polished insides so as to sell more rooms. The proper and efficient working of the housekeeping department influences the whole establishment. (Schneider, Tucker & Scoviak-Lerner, 1999)

## CHAPTER 2: HOUSEKEEPING OPERATIONS

### 2.1) Housekeeping (Traditional vs. Contemporary)

Earlier, housekeeping mainly referred to maintaining the cleanliness of the interiors and aesthetic appeal of an establishment. Housekeepers were generally underpaid, undervalued and overworked. They were pushed aside and left alone in doing the unglamorous tasks being given the recognition they deserved. Their work usually went unnoticed unless they made a mistake or did something wrong. Housekeeping basically remained confined to the back department but today, it is not the same anymore. In most of the high regarded lodging establishments, the housekeepers are given the opportunity to interact with their customers so as to enhance their comprehensive experience by personalizing the services offered. Guests staying in a lodging spends most of their time inside the room thus making it an absolute necessity for the housekeepers to play the role of front runners for maintaining a more homily aura in the establishment. (Schneider, Tucker & Scoviak-Lerner, 1999)

### 2.2) Job titles:

Choice of titles

(Singh & George, 2012)

### 2.3) Trends in Accommodation :

Trends in Accommodation can be categorized into:-

(Singh & George, 2012)

### 2.4) Challenges faced by housekeeping managers:

The housekeeping sector is fast evolving and some of the contemporary challenges that the managers today face include:

' Handling experienced and knowledgeable guests: guests today have a lot of experience which makes them well aware of the rights that they are entitled to. It is very challenging to satisfy such guests and the only way of doing so is by bringing in innovative ideas and keeping up with the changing trends and fashion.

' Staff poaching by rivals: A housekeeping staff member's day can be quiet monotonous and stressful. In such a situation it is possible for rival companies to easily persuade the employees to join their company by providing them with a higher salary. To prevent this from happening and to retain the employees, the manager has to keep the staff constantly motivated.

' Language barriers: Since housekeeping in a hotel does not extensively require for the housekeepers to have good speaking skills and be proficient in English, most of the staff hired are locals who do not speak English. Also since the job is mostly labor oriented, knowing languages is not given high importance. This sometimes stands up as a challenge for the managers when the employees can't communicate with the guests.

' Physical injuries: Housekeeping is a job that requires constant use of heavy machinery and hence can lead to minor (strain in muscles) or major injuries at any point of time. The manager must therefore make sure the all possible safety precautions are taken and must maintain a good relationship with the staff so that they can freely ask for any safety related assistance if required.

(Schneider, Tucker & Scoviak-Lerner, 1999)

### 2.5) Job description of an EHK:

(Singh & George, 2012)

## CHAPTER 3: LINEN

### 3.1) Introduction:

Linen is one of the most significant materials in a lodging establishment and the constantly escalating prices of the different fabrics make it highly necessary to follow measures to make use of linen efficiently.

Following are the commodities under hotel linen classification:

(Ed Offshack, 2013)

### 3.2) Importance:

It is very evident to every hotel operator that linen is a highly necessary component for their business. It is impossible to build a homily atmosphere and comfort for the guests without clean and elegant linen. Almost all guests that come to stay at a lodging association (be it budget or luxury) expect clean and visually appealing linen and provision of the same is absolutely necessary for procurement of the short and long term goals of the establishment in the market.

(Ecogreenhotel, 2015)

### 3.3) Challenges:

Commercially produced linen for hotels greatly differ and it takes highly tasteful individuals to seek out the favourable classification of linen.

Most hotels prefer using white linen simply for their elegant appearance but taking care of them is a formidable task specially when they are subject to various kinds of stains. (Eg. Coffee, shoe polish, makeup, etc.)

The linen inventory of most hotels get affected by the uncanny disappearance along with the wear and tear of the products due to negligence. Keeping a strict check on the linen inventory is also a huge challenge faced by most hotels.

(Ed Offshack, 2013)

## CHAPTER 4: TRENDS IN LINEN

### (MONARCH ECO & BAMBOO FIBER LINEN)

#### 4.1) Introduction to Monarch Eco:

Monarch Eco is modern series of hotel linen that is the first provider of an entire collection and range of environment conscious linen (including bed sheets, towels and bathrobes) from a particular source keeping the societal perspective in mind. It maximizes sturdiness and comfort while lowering washing costs and conserving energy. Eco green hotel recognizes the potential of the products and incorporates the use of them in their business.

According to the CEO of Monarch Eco, by using their products the hoteliers wouldn't have to choose any longer between durability, comfort/luxury and energy plus cost regulation.

(Gene Faul, 2015)

#### 4.2) Monarch Eco towels and bathrobes:

These are created with an ELS microfiber (cotton) fabric which are super long, fine, lint free, colossal and absorb much better as compared to traditionally used heftier cotton towels and bathrobes. These linen require very less washing liquid/detergent, consume scanty water and (up to 40% less), require around 20% shorter time for drying and hence lower the running costs while at the same time aiding the society and environment by not negatively impacting them in any way.

(Ecogreenhotel, 2015)

Characteristics of Monarch Eco Bathrobes and towels:

#### 4.3) Zero waste manufacturing and Comphy sheets:

Eco Monarch produces its linen in such a manner that it does not discharge any form and kind of waste into the environment. The manufacturing process also subsumes use of chemicals and dyes that are eco-friendly,

sustainable and certified by control union.

Comphy sheets are the most recent inclusion to eco monarch linen made from polyester that are 100% recyclable. Thread count- 600. Minimum guaranteed washes-300.

((Ecogreenhotel, 2015)

#### 4.4) Bamboo Fiber Linen:

Bamboo fibers are basically fabric obtained from natural/ organic and unprocessed bamboo. Earlier the fiber was mainly used in making corsets but only recently have they started using it in making linen wherein they either use pure bamboo fiber or blend it with some other fiber (E.g. Cotton).

Using pure bamboo fiber by hotels has a large number of advantages:

' Bamboo requires only 1/3rd the water as compared to cotton to grow and along with being the fastest growing shoot, it needs absolutely no artificial fertilizers.

' Bamboo fiber linen doesn't necessarily need chemical bleaching and apart from emitting 36% extra oxygen than other plants it also inbreathes a large amount of greenhouse gases.

' It is completely safe to be brought in contact with the skin as it causes no allergies or irritation.

' The antibacterial character of the fiber decreases impermissible odors from the cloth as well as from human skin.

' The usage of these fibers is also very economic as its price range is more or less similar to that of cotton.

(NRDC, 2011)

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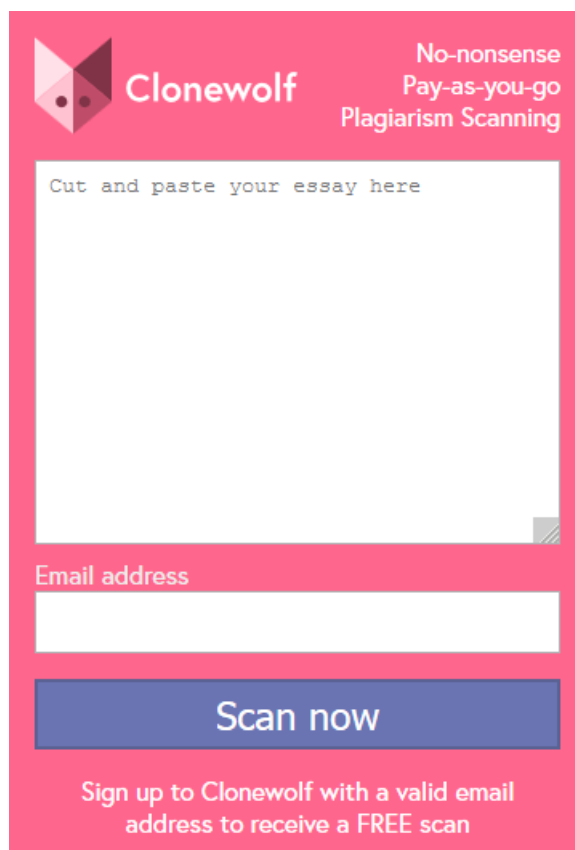
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