

5: Planning

Housekeeping Operations

This chapter will help you to:

- Understand the terms 'operational planning' and 'measuring performance' in housekeeping.
- Evaluate productivity standards and how productivity can be maximised in the housekeeping operation.
- Review the impact of Covid-19 on operational planning and the ways to mitigate those challenges.
- Learn about the LQA standards and their application in housekeeping processes.

Operational planning

Operational planning is a detailed plan which clearly defines what everyone in a team or department needs to do to achieve the strategic goals of the organization. This includes things like which tasks and strategies need to be completed, who is responsible for completing the tasks, when they need to be completed, and how much they will cost. One challenge of operational planning is effective communication. Making sure communication is consistent and effective can be difficult for anyone within an organization. However, for day-to-day operations to run smoothly it is vital to master written, oral, and non-verbal communication. Well-communicated expectations and tasks are more likely to motivate staff and ensure targets are met through high productivity. Good communication also builds employee moral, which is essential for maximizing productivity and deepens employee trust with management. On the other hand, it is important to make sure effective communication doesn't turn into information overload. This is because when there is too much information for individuals to manage, they will simply start to ignore and discard information, which will not ensure productivity maximization.

Performance

Performance in housekeeping operations is defined as the ability of the team members to attain the highest standards set by the hotel. Performance is the output expected from each employee with regards to their specific task. To achieve the maximum efficiency each task has its set principles and specifications which, when followed, generate the expected results. Time and motion studies help the housekeeping department to determine the average time required to finish each task.

The role of the housekeeping department in attaining the overall guest satisfaction and having a positive impact on the bottom line is vital. For a hotel to achieve a promising RevPAR (Revenue Per Available Room) and a higher guest satisfaction score it is important to evaluate the performance of the housekeeping department. Measuring performance of the housekeeping department is crucial as it is one of the most labour-intensive departments and is responsible to provide a high level of quality service by adding value to the guest experience and must adjust to the varying demands of the hotel. Therefore, to evaluate the performance of the team members it is important to set the KPI (Key performance Indicator).

Performance and productivity standard varies as they depend on the size of the hotel. The KPIs (key performance indicators) must be relevant to the core activity. When setting the KPI for a task, it is important to analyse the trends and foresee the challenges coming to determine the strategic changes required. It also helps to support the staff members who are unable to meet the expected performance standards by planning required training. Once the KPIs are set, they are evaluated by carrying out regular inspections and audits, and this planned systematic approach helps to utilise the management time in an effective manner.

The KPI can be identified by breaking down the housekeeping task into three categories using the framework:

- 1 Input which includes the preparation stage
- 2 Process includes the actual delivery
- 3 Output includes the result

Scheduling time for the managers and supervisors to focus on the individual performance of the team members by identifying the training needs and guiding mentoring accordingly will ensure a consistent and quality service.