

## Functions of the Housekeeping Department

*Four main function*

1. Clearing and Maintenance
2. Training of its personnel
3. Requisition & Control
  - Supplies
  - Equipment
4. Paperwork
  - Scheduling & Reports

## What is HOUSEKEEPING?

### Housekeeping

Dictionary definition:

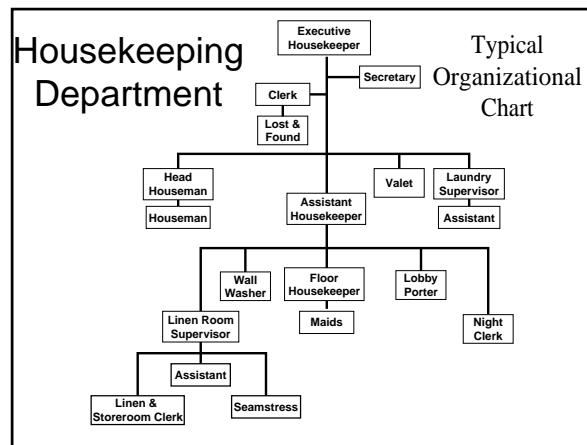
“One who does or oversees the work of keeping house”

▪ **Private Family Home:**

Includes taking care of the kitchen along with the rest of the house

▪ **Hotels:**

Does not include the kitchen



### Housekeeping - Hotels

- ✓ Guest Rooms
- ✓ Halls & Corridors
- ✓ Lobby
- ✓ Public rooms and restaurants
- ✓ Offices (*hotel personnel*)
- ✓ Stairways
- ✓ Windows
- ✓ Stores, Concessions & other leased areas

### Occupation & Workplace Hotel Housekeeping

- Very physically demanding
- Case Study – Average 16 rooms per shift
- 15 – 30 min per room
- Various Task

## **Room Cleaning Tasks**

- Making beds
- Tidying rooms
- Cleaning & polishing toilets, taps, sinks, bathtubs and mirrors
- Removing stains
- Washing floors
- Vacuuming carpets

## **Risk Factors of Housekeeping *Repetitive Motion Injuries - RMI***

- Heavy physical workload & excessive bodily motions which are a high risk for back injuries
- Forceful upper limb motions in awkward positions which are a high risk for neck or shoulder and arm injuries.

## **Risk Factors of Housekeeping *Repetitive Motion Injuries - RMI***

1. Space limitations requires workers to use many uncomfortable positions

- |              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| • Standing   | • Reaching  |
| • Walking    | • Bending   |
| • Stooping   | • Twisting  |
| • Keeling    | • Crouching |
| • Stretching | • Squatting |

## **Risk Factors of Housekeeping *Repetitive Motion Injuries - RMI***

2. Body position changes every 3 seconds while cleaning a room.

### **Assumption**

- Average cleaning time = 25 min per room
- Body position shifts 8,000 times per shift

## **Risk Factors of Housekeeping *Repetitive Motion Injuries - RMI***

3. Forceful movement while in awkward positions include:
  - Lifting mattresses
  - Cleaning tiles
  - Vacuuming
4. It is classified as “Moderately Heavy – Heavy work”.
5. Energy required: 4 kilocalories per min.

## **Risk Factors of Housekeeping *Repetitive Motion Injuries - RMI***

- Hotels are designed for comfort of guests rather than their housekeeping staff.
- Very difficult to improve working conditions for housekeepers by reengineering room design.
- Equipment improvement concepts:
  - Lighter vacuum cleaners
  - Lighter service carts with wheels designed for carpeted floors.
  - Keep equipment in good repair

### **Risk Factors of Housekeeping**

#### ***Repetitive Motion Injuries - RMI***

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### **Customer Acceptations**

- To attract customers and stay competitive, hotel management pursues the policy that everything should be “*So Clean It Sparkles*”
- The demand for spotless cleanliness and hygiene, requires the cleaning staff to spend extra time and effort cleaning by kneeling, leaning, squatting, crouching, slouching and stretching.
- This will in time contribute to new musculoskeletal injuries and aggravate old ones.

### **Improvement Concepts**

- New approaches to reduce the RMIs
  - **Job rotation**
  - **Job enrichment**
  - **Job enlargement**
  - **Team work**

### **Improvement Concepts** ***Job Rotation***

- It requires workers to move between different tasks at fixed or irregular periods.
- It must be rotated where workers do something completely different
- Different tasks must use different muscle groups to allow muscle already stressed to recover.

### **Improvement Concepts** ***Job Enlargement & Enrichment***

- Increases the variety of tasks built into the job
- It breaks the monotony
- Avoids overloading one part of the body
- Job enrichment involves more autonomy and control for the worker

### **Improvement Concepts** ***Team Work***

- Provide greater variety and more evenly distributed muscle work.
- Each team member is involved in the planning of the work
- Each team member carries out a set of operations to complete the whole product.
- Allows the worker to alternate between tasks

## Hotel Room Cleaning Tasks

## Housekeeping: The Scope of the Lodging Industry

- The heart of the lodging industry
- The toughest job in the business
- Two prime function
  - Clean interiors to increase sales
    - Main reason guest chose not to return is dirty rooms
  - Protect owners investments
    - Some upscale properties spend thousands of \$\$\$ on interior rooms and furnishing/paintings for public rooms

## Types of Lodging Establishments

- Hotel
  - Guest rooms are accessed from the interior
- Motel
  - Defined as a hotel for motorist
- **Types: What are some Advantages/Disadvantages?**
- **Deluxe**, (most small-less than 300 rooms) **Upscale**, (300-1000 rooms- business oriented **Mid-tier Hotel/Motel**, (most rapid change) **Economy/Limited Service Properties**, **All Suites Hotel**, **Extended Stay**,
- **Resorts and Time-share**, **Inns**, **Casino**, **Cruise Ships**, **Residential and Clubs** e.g.. sr. living facilities, **Specialties Boutique**

## Key Roles & Responsibilities of the Professional Housekeeper

**Work within the proper chain of command.**  
**Understand management philosophies**  
**Be very familiar with the properties organizational charts**  
**Staffing responsibilities**

## Executive Housekeepers

- Generally sit on the properties Executive Committee.
  - Primary decision making body
    - GM and other department heads help realize properties financial goals.
- Answers to many departments as well as divisions.
  - Divisions are broader in scope e.g. rooms division
  - Departments are broken down to specialized functions e.g. cleaning & laundry
- Has a broad understanding of management concepts.

## Management Styles & Responsibilities

- **Styles:**
  - **Decentralized vs. centralized**
  - **Scientific**(cooperation between employee and worker
  - **Empowerment & participative**
  - **Total Quality Management**-(obsessed with quality)
  - **Systems Management**
- **Managerial Responsibilities**
  - **Operations Management**
  - **Labor Management**
  - **Financial Management**
  - **Leadership Skills**
  - **Safety & Security**
  - **Laundry Management**
  - **Computer Skills**
  - **Chemistry**
  - **Union Regulations**
  - **Guest Relations**

### Job Description

- Title: Linen Controller
- Responsible to: Director of Housekeeping
- **Purpose and Function**
  - A. Control and coordinate the receiving of clean tablecloths and napkins and issue those linens requisitioned by the various food and beverage facilities within the hotel. The functions of this service are as follows:
    - 1. Receiving linen several times throughout the day as it is processed by the laundry and delivered.
    - 2. Inspection of linens for burns, tears, fading, etc. maintaining standards outlined to you with samples.
    - 3. Stocking of linens on selves according to size,color, and use for each food or beverage facility.

### Job Description- continued

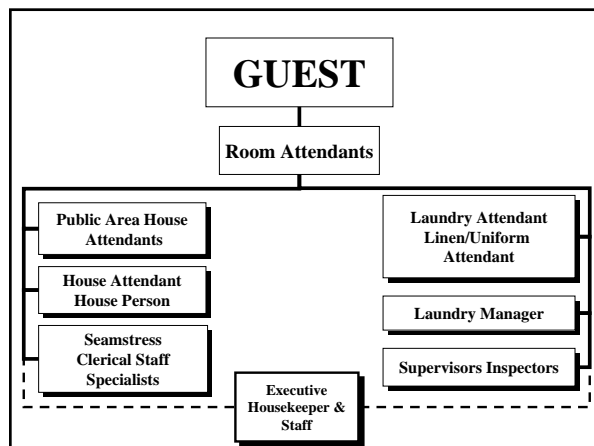
- 4. Issuing linens for only the amount requisitioned that day.
- 5. Communications with laundry manager for a specially requested quantity, color, or size linen that is in short supply or not available on the shelf when requested.
- 6. Issuing only the linens designated for each facilities use.  
REMEMBER: Banquet department has priority on linens necessary for its use.
- B. Adequately control, and give proper attention to, the issuance of linen to the housekeeping department Failure to keep track of linens results in their misuse, damage, and disappearance, thus wasting time and money.
- C. Remove all linens requiring repairs to the sewing room.

### Job Specification

- Job Title: Linen Controller
- Number Employed: 1
- Hours: 7:30AM to 3:30PM; Monday to Friday
- Days Off: 2 consecutive days in 7 days
- Vacation: 1 week after 1 year, 2 weeks after 3 years
- Salary: Union scale
- Extras: Uniforms furnished; 1 meal
- Working conditions: pleasant
- Contact: Employees of food and beverage, banquet, all other departments that use linens
- Supervisor: Assistant housekeeper
- Type of labor: Unskilled
- Responsibility: All f and b linens be in good condition.

### Job Specification- continued

- Age limits: 20 years or older (see physical qualifications, )below
- Mental qualifications: Average; ability to follow instructions; alert
- Personality and appearance: very pleasant; careful; neat
- Experience: none required
- Education: Able to read,write,speak, or understand Spanish or whichever second language is wide spread in the area.
- Physical qualifications: Able to stand light, sustained physical activity- including frequent use of arms; able to lift moderate weight; good eyesight for examining fabrics for stains, snags, and holes and for stitching in linens.



### Right-sizing your labor needs

- Time and Motion Studies & Quotas
- **How to find the right staff**
  - Tap resources on-property
  - Staff referrals
  - Human resources
  - Off-premise resources/Advertising
  - Culturally Diverse market
  - Recruitment Specialists
  - Internet
  - Overlooked sources
    - Unions,hospitals, churches, military bases, baby boomers, early retirees,part-timers, women returning to work force

## The Importance of Hiring & Interviewing Effectively

- Good Rules for Improved Interviewing:
  - Practice
  - Be Prepared
  - Find a private place
  - Study the Application
  - Encourage the applicant to talk
  - Ask questions that involve explanations
  - Recheck dates on application w/ the applicant
  - Give complete, honest, accurate information about the job and the company.
  - Evaluate and rate the applicant
  - Avoid crisis hiring

## Some Hiring Issues

- Evaluating Personality Traits
- Avoiding Illegal Questions
  - Discrimination, unions, religious affiliation, personal, health issues.
  - The right questions on citizenship
  - Clarifying physical requirements
  - Interviewing non-English speaking applicants
  - Testing
  - Discussing Salaries and benefits
  - Lean to listen and follow up on verifying information on applications

## Orientation & Scheduling

- 1<sup>st</sup> day is very important
  - Give employee handbook & procedure manual
    - Make sure manual contains all pertinent information relating to the job.
  - Use an orientation checklist
- Create standing/rotational schedules
- Create daily schedules
- Scheduling part timers and swing staff
- Special requests
- Handling leaves
- What to do about call-offs & no shows

## Training, Training, Training

- Training should be viewed as an investment; it has a direct payoff in productivity & reduced performance problems.
- **Basic job categories:**
  - **Entry level employees**
    - Learn from a staff veteran e.g., floor supervisor, team leader, floor housekeeper, inspectors
  - **Supervisory employees**
    - Usually within the ranks, training takes about 1 hour a week for 16 weeks.
  - **Management trainees-**
    - Usually students who have completed a minimum amount of coursework in hotel management courses. Takes about 1-2 years of training
  - **Managers- set policy and make decisions**
    - Requires longest training periods.

## The 4 step Training Method

- **Explain or Tell the Process**
  - Put them at ease. Tell what the job is and find out how much they already know. Start where their knowledge lets off. Make them interested in learning. Relate how important their job is.
- **Show**
  - Show the process one step at a time and be patient. Be clear and stress key points.
- **Do**
  - Have employee do the task until he feels comfortable. Be patient.
- **Review**
  - Give extra help on problem areas. Be patient and supportive.

## Cross Training

- Employees learn to perform more than one job function.
  - Most successful cross training is between other departments as well.
- **Examples:**
  - Where linens are restocked, safety procedures, record keeping, inventory reports, do they have some computer skills, answers phone, take messages, fill guest requests, learn house persons jobs. Interdepartmental training assures jobs during low period.
- **Team Training-**
  - 2-3 member teams learning team concepts and alleviating repetitive tasks
- **Continuing Education Training**
  - Should be ongoing and current Examples: workshops, seminars, colleges or universities. Trade magazines, free training sessions offered by new equipment/product sales people.
- **Discussion: What skills would be most attractive for entry level employees to learn as part of their cross-training????**

## Motivating Staff

- How the executive housekeeper motivates staff through leadership.
  - Leading by example & interacting with staff
    - Executive housekeepers should be able to perform all tasks the staff must perform. Working along side the staff helps breakdown barriers & reinforce team concepts.
  - Being supportive while also being fair & firm is one of the best motivators.
    - Firmness, fairness & a willingness to listen to concerns are necessary qualities for a department leader

## Building the Right Incentives

Discussion: Are incentives necessary to get employees to come to work each day & perform their job properly???

- **Monetary Incentives**
  - Point system
  - Productivity rewards
  - Cleaning team rewards
  - Lump sum Bonuses
  - On the spot Bonuses
  - Attendances Bonuses
  - Property Wide Bonuses
    - Only for hourly employees
  - Addressing gifts/ tips left by guest?
- **Non-Monetary**
  - Choice Assignments
  - Cross training
  - Free Stays
  - Free meal tickets & vouchers
  - Early dismissal
  - Recognition & Pride in performance
  - When do you issue a Package pass?

## Evaluating Performances

- SOP- Standards Of Performance – a part of modern management systems for over 30 years.
  - Defines tasks in terms of results.
  - A tool to use in setting up evaluation reports
    - Involving employees in the format of his/her SOP helps employees understand responsibilities & goals
    - Employees should be consulted before & during development of SOP. E.g. team & staff meetings using brainstorming etc.
    - SOP's cover both day to day tasks as well as tasks done periodically.
      - What are some issues that could be addressed? Page. 78
  - To be fair and constructive, Housekeepers should base ratings on their own observations as well as observations of several other staff & supervisory teams/individuals

## Records to keep Regarding Evaluations

Inspection reports  
 Assignment Sheets  
 Notes on Awards & Rewards  
 Disciplinary Records  
 Attendance Reports  
 Favorable or Unfavorable Guest Comment Cards

## Skills For Weighing Promotions & Addressing the Issues of Raises

- **Promotions**
  - The ultimate form of recognition
  - Good performance can earn a room attendant self-supervisory status
  - Top performing member of team can be team leader
  - Housekeeper must be creative
  - Skills to weigh promotions page 81
- **Raises**
  - Basic motivational tools
  - Hourly workers are fairly small – sometimes only .25 an hour while management raises are based on a percentage basis
  - Union properties have a scale that must be followed

## Disciplinary Problems

- **Misconduct, from insubordination to harassment**
  - Disregard for property rules/regulation
  - Poor performance
  - Dishonesty/insolence
  - Discrimination
  - Fighting/ possession of a weapon
- **Illness and additions**
  - How to recognize?
    - Check with human resources for all legal options unless you are a medical doctor yourself.
- **Some workable Solutions:**
  - On the spot retraining
  - Counseling
  - Probation

### How to Discharge Employees without Inviting Legal Problems

- Always work with Human Resources or the General Manager to make this process as professional and legally correct as possible.
- Disciplinary actions usually follow this course:
  - Verbal warnings – minor violations-
    - should always be documented.
  - Written warnings- Major violations
  - Suspension
  - Dismissal – usually after 3 written reprimands
    - If unions are involved, check with union for contracted procedures.

### Discussion Point

As executive housekeepers, students will have to dismiss employees in a variety of circumstances. Dismissal is difficult. How should this be addressed? How can it affect the remaining staff? Why is it necessary to be firm in this procedure?