



Housekeeping

by Angelo Calbone

Documenting employee performance through housekeeping checklists

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As hotel managers are well aware, most housekeeping positions require repetitive performance and attention to detail. Standards of cleanliness and presentation are established by each brand, corporate office, or owner, and it is the responsibility of the general manager and housekeeping leadership team to ensure that these standards are met. Hence, all housekeeping work is subject to inspection and re-inspection.

Unfortunately, some less conscientious housekeeping employees may not heed standards as well as others. They often seek shortcuts to complete their allotment of assigned rooms or guest floors. When this happens, cleanliness and appearance take a back seat to convenience and rapidity. Attentive guests will notice the difference; less detailed-oriented ones may not. Regardless, such service failures result in an inconsistent brand image being created in guests' minds and greater wear and tear on the furniture, fixtures and equipment, thus reducing the service life of such assets.

When a housekeeping inspector asks an employee why they failed to maintain cleanliness and appearance standards in the performance of their duties, more than likely they will hear varied excuses or rationalizations. The most common variations cite lack of time to complete all required tasks, ignorance as to what the standards really were, or that the employee lacked the necessary tools to perform the tasks needed to meet such standard. Usually, the first excuse is a non-starter as experienced housekeeping managers and supervisors know how many guestrooms can be cleaned in a typical shift. It is the second and third excuses, that if true (though not necessarily valid) which allude to improper training and/or improper preparation for the work shift. This is where checklists can serve as both a reminder to the employee and as an inspection and documentation tool for assessment and progressive discipline measures.

Inserted in this issue of *The Rooms Chronicle* are two housekeeping inspection checklists, one for room attendant's carts and the other for housemen guest floor duties. These are a great way to remind new trainees about their various duties and for them to refer to when stocking their housekeeping carts at the start of their shift. These checklists are intended to augment those provided in the July/August 2007 issue of TRC, which included Technical Skills Training Checklists for new room attendants and lobby attendants. ✧

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