

Participant Handbook

Sector
Tourism and Hospitality

Sub-Sector
Hotels

Occupation
Front Office Management

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NSQF Level 4



Front Office Associate

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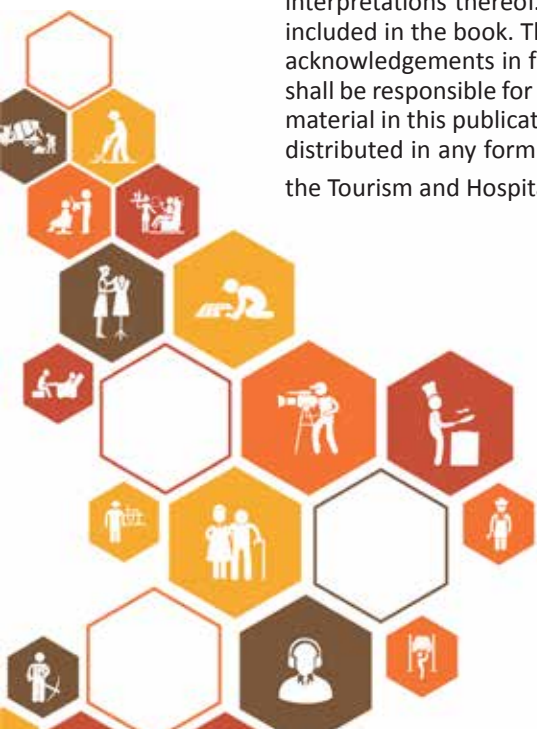
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Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister of India

“ Skilling is building a better India. If we have to move India towards development then Skill Development should be our mission. ”



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TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY SKILL COUNCIL

for

SKILLING CONTENT : PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

Complying to National Occupational Standards of
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The preparation of this manual would not have been possible without the support of the Tourism and Hospitality Industry. The Industry feedback has been extremely encouraging from inception to conclusion & it is with their inputs that we have tried to bridge the skill gaps existing today in the Industry.

This participant manual is dedicated to all the aspiring youth who desire to achieve special skills which would be a lifelong asset for their future endeavors and help them make a bright career in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector.

October -2016

CEO
THSC

About this book

The Indian Tourism & Hospitality industry has shown immense growth potential among the services sector in India. As one of the leading avenues for employment in the country, the role played by this industry in the economic development of India is pivotal. However despite its vast potential, the industry faces a key challenge of shortage of skilled and trained manpower.

There is a vast difference between the required skill and available skills of service providers in the industry today. To reduce the skill gap, appropriate skilling of workforce needs to be carried out. This will not only empower the service providers but also benefit the Tourism & Hospitality industry in terms of quality and productivity.

This Participant Handbook is developed to impart training for the skill and knowledge required to work as a Front Office Associate in the Tourism & Hospitality industry. It is designed based on Front Office Associate Qualification Pack under the National Skill Qualification Framework. It comprises of the following NOS/ topics:

- Record guest details for registration.
- Follow check-in procedure and allot room.
- Attend to guest queries.
- Perform cashiering activities.
- Communicate with Customer and Colleagues.
- Maintain Customer-Centric Service Orientation.
- Maintain Standard of Etiquette and Hospitable Conduct.
- Follow Gender and Age Sensitive Service Practices.
- Maintain IPR of Organisation and Customers.
- Maintain Health and Hygiene.
- Maintain Safety at Workplace.
- Learn a Foreign or Local Language(s) including English.

This book is designed considering the lower educational background of the hospitality staff. Therefore special efforts have been made to explain the concept required for the job mostly through photos and illustrations.

Symbols Used



Key Learning
Outcomes



Steps



Exercise



Tips



Notes



Objectives

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1. Introduction

Unit 1.1 - Introduction to the Training Programme

Unit 1.2 - Introduction to the Tourism and Hospitality Sector

Unit 1.3 - Introduction to Lodging

Unit 1.4 - Attributes of a Front Office Associate

Key Learning Outcomes



At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Discuss the purpose and benefits of training programme
2. Discuss the National Occupation Standards and Qualification Pack
3. Explain the responsibilities and personal attribute of a Front Office Associate
4. Discover historical background of tourism and hospitality sector
5. Examine American inns and English inns & international and domestic hotel chains
6. Examine attributes of front office staff
7. Discover historical background of tourism and hospitality sector
8. Examine American inns and English inns & international and domestic hotel chains

UNIT 1.1: Introduction to the Training Programme

Unit Objectives



At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Discuss the purpose and benefits of training programme
2. Discuss the National Occupation Standards and Qualification Pack
3. Explain the responsibilities and personal attribute of a Front Office Associate

1.1.1 Purpose and Benefits of the Training Programme

This training programme is developed to impart specific skills to individuals who wish to perform as a Front Office Associate. The training programme is based upon National Occupation Standards for a cooking. The National Occupation Standards have been described in the following subsection of this chapter.



Fig.1.1.1. Classroom Session



Fig.1.1.2 Front office area

The training programme will enable an individual to:

- record guest details for registration;
- follow check-in procedure and allot room;
- attend to guest queries;
- perform cashiering activities;
- communicate with customer and colleagues;
- maintain customer-centric service orientation;
- maintain standard of etiquette and hospitable conduct;
- follow gender and age sensitive service practices;
- maintain IPR of organisation and customers;
- maintain health and hygiene;
- maintain safety at workplace;
- learn a foreign or local language(s) including English.

After successful completion of training and passing the assessment you will be issued a certificate. This will get you an employment as a Front Office Associate in food production area. This certificate will help you to get job and earn better wages than an untrained person.

1.1.2 Introduction to QP and NOS

This training programme is intended for imparting basic skill and knowledge relevant to front office. This programme is based on qualification pack called **Front Office Associate**. The Qualification Pack Code for **Front Office Associate** is **THC/Q0102**. It is also called a **QP**.

A QP consists of a set of National Occupational Standards (NOS). NOS specifies the standard competency a worker must achieve when carrying out a function in the workplace.

Under Front Office Associate QP there are twelve NOSs, which detail the functions to be performed in a Front Office Area by a Front Office Associate.

NOS Code	Major Function/Task
THC/N0108	Record guest details for registration
THC/N3006	Follow check-in procedure and allot room
THC/N0109	Attend to guest queries
THC/N0110	Perform cashiering activities
THC/N9901	Communicate with Customer and Colleagues
THC/N9902	Maintain Customer-Centric Service Orientation
THC/N9903	Maintain Standard of Etiquette and Hospitable Conduct
THC/N9904	Follow Gender and Age Sensitive Service Practices
THC/N9905	Maintain IPR of Organisation and Customers
THC/N9906	Maintain Health and Hygiene
THC/N9907	Maintain Safety at Workplace
THC/N9909	Learn a Foreign or Local Language(s) including English

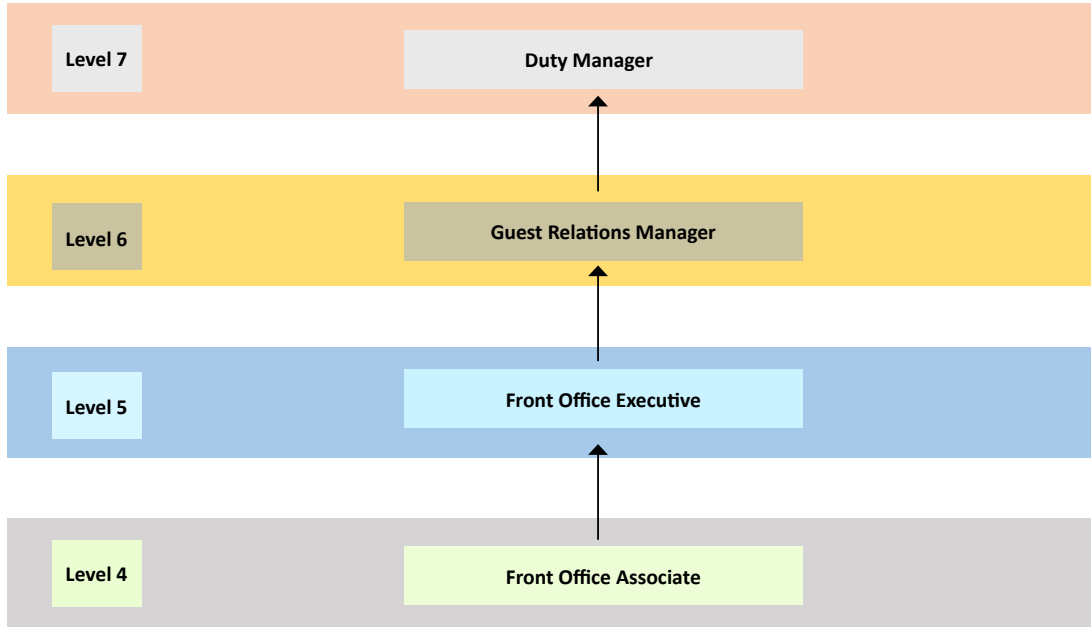
1.1.3 Responsibilities of Front Office Associate

A Front Office Associate is expected to perform the following tasks:

- record guest details for registration;
- follow check-in procedure and allot room;
- attend to guest queries;
- perform cashiering activities
- communicate with customer and colleagues;
- maintain customer-centric service orientation;
- maintain standard of etiquette and hospitable conduct;
- follow gender and age sensitive service practices;
- maintain IPR of organisation and customers;
- maintain health and hygiene;
- maintain safety at workplace;
- learn a foreign or local language(s) including English.

1.1.4 Growth Path and Qualification Pack

The growth path represents the work progression of a Front Office Associate and also shows the requirement for progression into the next level.



UNIT 1.2: Introduction to the Tourism and Hospitality Sector

Unit Objectives



At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Discover historical background of tourism and hospitality sector
2. Examine American inns and English inns & international and domestic hotel chains

1.2.1 Tourism and Hospitality Sector

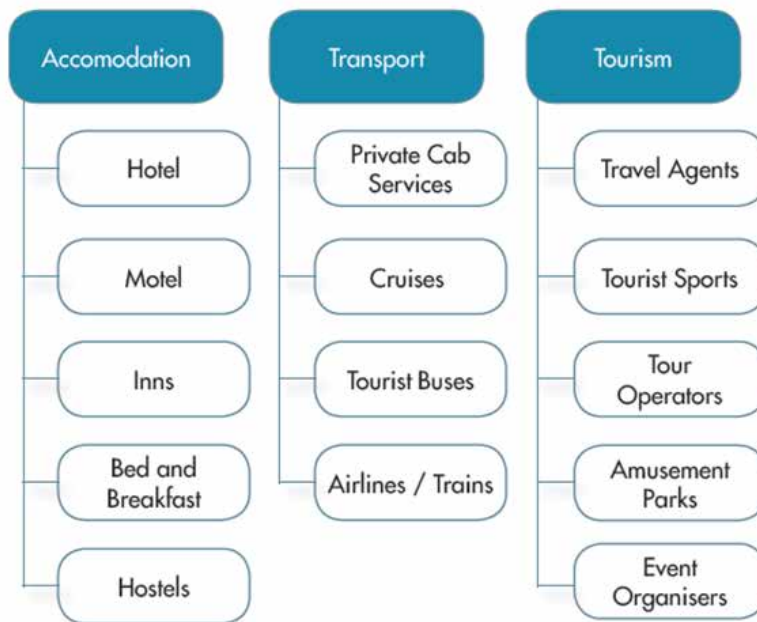
The concept of hospitality dates back to Ancient Greece and Rome. It is referred to in quite a few of their writing. Researchers believe that people then believed they had to be hospitable due to superstitious fears. This idea has clearly evolved over the last few centuries. Today, hospitality is not just inviting someone to your home; it is an industry that caters to travellers from around the world.

The hospitality industry is a prospering industry that comprises of a large category of sectors within the service industry. This includes accommodation, restaurants, transport services and travel and tourism. Amusements parks and event management agencies also fall within the scope of the hospitality industry.



Fig.1.2.1. A Restaurant

1.2.2 Sectors of the Hospitality Industry

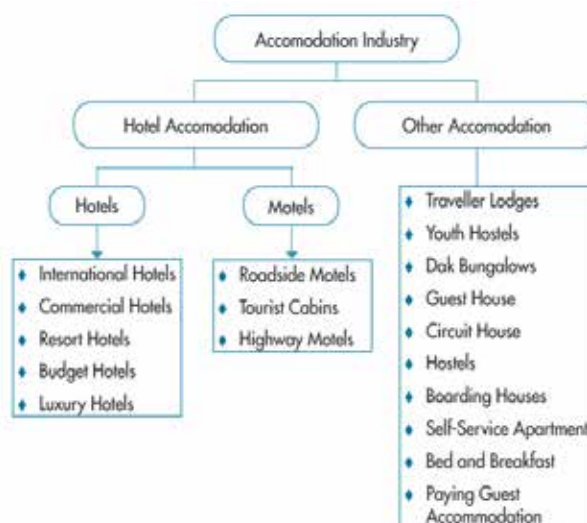


1.2.3 Hotel Industry

Hotels function as a home away from home for most travellers. It is where a traveller is welcomed as a guest and treated to the comforts of home, at a price of course. Most hotels provide the basic facilities like a bed and bath, the amenities increase depending on the type of hotel you've chosen.

In the 14th century, places that offered accommodation were known as inns. The term 'hotel' became popular only in the 18th century. In that time, it was a place that offered lodging, food and drink to travellers. With time, the "hotel" became a formal business enterprise that offered many improved facilities to travellers.

Many different terms are used to define a place of accommodation:



The difference lies in the types of facilities offered by each type of accommodation.

American Inns and English Inns: Inns provide fresh, clean and comfortable lodging facilities for travellers. They give you the comfort of home when you are away for business purpose. Inns are usually situated in a country or alongside highway. Along with accommodation facilities, inns also offer food and refreshments services. There are different types of rooms available in an inn, including study, studio, standard and executive rooms. Additionally, some inns have facilities such as outdoor pool and spa, laundry, microwave, refrigerator and hot breakfast.



Fig.1.2.2. American Inns and English Inns

International Hotel Chains: Large cities and tourist regions have modern western international hotels, from five-star to one-star. These hotels offer restaurant facilities, accommodation banqueting suites, grillrooms and bars. International hotel's purpose is to make the tourists/ foreigners feel like home. Hence, most of their services are in line with the foreign hotel.

Domestic Hotel Chains: These hotels are designed to cater to locals who travel within a region. Domestic hotels provide limited and region-specific services. For instance, a hotel in a Patna will only provide food that is specific to the state. Although it is a local establishment, domestic hotel will be open for all.

UNIT 1.3: Introduction to Lodging

Unit Objectives

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Discover historical background of tourism and hospitality sector
2. Examine American inns and English inns & international and domestic hotel chains

1.3.1 Introduction to Lodging

Travelling majorly influenced the growth of the lodging industry because people needed places for shelter and food along the routes they travelled. The hotel industry is one of the oldest lodging industries across the world. The first mention of Inns dates back to 3000BC. It was spurred by urge to travel.

The earliest Inns were homes of husband and wife teams who provided large halls, often unclear, for travellers to roll out their own beds and sleep in the floor in dormitory style. The innkeepers provided sufficient amount of healthy food like cheese, meat, vegetables, buns along with wine and beer.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth century, private inns in Britain grew. These included the Tabard Inn at Southwark, which was made famous by Chaucer's Canterbury Tales and The George Hotel in Oxfordshire, a testimony of fifteenth century.

The opening of City Hotel in New York, in the US, in 1794, gave way to the real growth of the modern hotel industry. The Tremont House in Boston was the first luxury hotel in America in 1829. It was the first to offer private rooms with lock, washbasin, pitcher and soap. Additionally, it had a French Restaurant and uniformed service personnel. This indicated the development of luxury hotels in the US during the 1800s, which included The Grand Pacific in Chicago.

In 1908, Ellsworth M Statler built the first business hotel called The Statler Hotel in Buffalo, New York with big investment, big profits and trained professionals. The hotel provided private baths and full length mirror in each room. In 1927, The Statler Hotel became the first hotel chains in the world.

The depression had a horrifying effect on the hotel industry in 1930, due to the World War I. Nearly, 85% of the hotels went bankrupt. It seems like the industry would never recover. However, on hotelier who kept afloat was Conrad Hilton. He made the Mobley, Cisco, Texas a profitable venture. The outbreak of World War II brought a tremendous upsurge.

1.3.1 Introduction to Lodging

Hotel: A small establishment that provides lodging paid on a short-term basis is called a Hotel. It provides facilities like a modest-quality mattress in a small room, large suites with bigger, higher-quality beds, a dresser, a fridge and other kitchen facilities, upholstered chairs, a flatscreen television and en-suite bathrooms.



Fig.1.3.1. Hotel

Motel: A small roadside hotel meant for motorists; they are also called as Motor Hotels as they are located alongside the highway. A motel has small rooms arranged in low blocks with parking directly outside. They provide comfortable bedrooms and economical services. They also have motor garage facilities. Being a small establishment, a motel provides limited food service. They do not have a lot of items on their menu; only basic food is available.

Inn: Establishments or buildings where travellers can seek lodging and, usually, food and drink are called Inns. They are typically located in the country or along a highway. Before the rise of motorised transportation they also provided accommodation for horses.

Botel: A boat that float in a river and serves as a hotel is called a Botel. These may range from small or larger purpose-built or converted boats or other watercraft, to converted ships. Botels may be permanently moored or grounded, or spend part of the year taking guests on tours.



Fig.1.3.2. Botel

Flotel: Flotels are used as hotels on rivers or in harbour areas, or as accommodation of working people, especially in the offshore oil industry.

Resort: It is a term primarily known as a destination frequented by vacationers in search of relaxation and entertainment. However, Resort is also used to describe a full service lodging establishment which offers extensive guest services and recreational facilities.

UNIT 1.4: Attributes of Front Office Associate

Unit Objectives



At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Examine attributes of front office staff

1.4.1 Attributes of Front Office Associate

Front office staff is usually the first people with whom the guests interact. Along with the usual knowledge and skills a front office staff member should have behavioural qualities such as politeness, a smiling face, helpfulness, orderliness and professional attitude. It is the duty of the front office staff to serve the guest. The following are some of the essential characteristics a front office staff member must possess:

Punctuality: This aspect is considered important in all the industries. If the front office staff member keeps continuously coming late it shows a lack of interest in their work. It also indicates a lack of respect for the management and customers.

Local Knowledge: A front office staff member must know about the local area in which they are working. With this knowledge they will be able to advise and guide guests correctly.

Personality: Customer/guests will quickly like someone who is tactful, courteous, good humoured and of even temper. A front office staff member must have the ability to converse with guests in a pleasing manner. They should be able to smile at the right places as this adds greatly to the customers' dining experience.



Fig.1.4.1. Front Office Staff on Duty

Accuracy: A front office staff member is supposed to show accuracy while providing information to a guest, while on phone or in person. They should accurately connect the correct extension of the guest or other hotel staff. Additionally, they have to accurately record appropriate charges for services rendered.

Speed: It is essential to be quick while providing any service to the guest. However, a front office staff member should be careful that while speeding up things they are not sacrificing on accuracy and quality. They should be able to maintain consistency with speed.

Clarity of Speech while on Telephone: Since people cannot see each other during a telephonic conversation, clarity of speech is necessary. A front office staff member should ensure that they are not misheard or misunderstood during such a conversation. While speaking on the phone the tone and pace of their voice should be proper. They must sound professional, not emotional. Moreover, they must patiently repeat the entire message, if the guest has not understood the instructions correctly.

Right Attitude towards Guests/Customers: It is very important to have the correct approach toward a customer/guest. A front office staff member must exhibit a joy in serving people. Proud and confident about their work will bring excellence in their job. They should be attentive, but not instructive, at all times while serving.

Cultural Awareness: A front office staff member should be open-minded, non-judgemental and flexible towards customers/guests. They should be able to appreciate and respect others' values and beliefs.

Good Memory: Having good memory is always a benefit for any front office staff member. It will help them to serve the customers/guests better if they are able to remember their likes and dislikes.

Honesty and Loyalty: Being honest and loyal with customers/guests and management creates a good atmosphere at work. It also helps to increase efficiency and team spirit in the organisation. A front office staff member should be committed to fulfilling their department's aims and objectives.

Conduct: Conduct of a front office staff member should be flawless at all times, particularly in front of customers/guests. They should follow all the rules and regulations of their organisation. They must respect all senior members of staff.