

Optimizing Front Office Human Resources through Empowerment of HRD Padma Hotel Semarang

¹Haura Tabriza Asyan, ²Syaiful Ade Septemuryantoro

¹Universitas Dian Nuswantoro

1313202200414@mhs.dinus.ac.id

²Universitas Dian Nuswantoro

2syaiful.ade@dinus.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

The world of tourism is a sector with great potential, especially in the field of hospitality. It has a big impact in supporting the economy and can attract local and international tourists. Hotels have various departments with the same vision and mission to develop and introduce their work ethic. So the need for assistance from human resources in controlling problems such as an unhealthy work environment, lack of good communication, and uncomfortable attitude of superiors. The performance of hotel employees is a benchmark in the assessment of guests who come to stay or just visit. It is also a determining factor in the success of a hotel. The purpose of this research is to find out what empowerment and training need to be considered so that hotel front office employees can work optimally and continue to grow. To get the results of the research, a qualitative method is used with identification and observation that focuses on case studies of events that have occurred. The results showed that there is a need for assistance and review of the sections in the Front Office Department to support employee performance. Significant changes are seen in the quality of employees including speed of service, employee friendliness, and ability to overcome problems by focusing on the level of guest satisfaction. Provides insight into the need to optimize employee performance in the sustainability of the work environment and hotel. The implication of this research is the importance for hotels to continue to improve service quality and pay attention to the front office work environment as an effort to maintain and increase the number of guests.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a sector that has great potential in helping a country's economic growth. It has the potential to continue to grow in the ever-growing era of globalization. In Gunawan's (2016) explanation, tourism is a phenomenon regarding a group of people, organizations, cultures, and so on which is a sociological study. However, there is also a general explanation that explains tourism includes government activities, and community efforts to organize, manage, and serve the needs of tourists. Tourism has various definitions, which are generally centered on social and cultural activities. Based on Tourism Law Number 10 of 2009, it explains that tourism includes various tourism activities supported by facilities and services provided by the community, entrepreneurs, or the government. Through the explanation above, it can be concluded that tourism also aims to help introduce the region, improve the economy, build the environment, introduce the region, be able to preserve nature, and raise the nation's image.

In the world of tourism there are various aspects, one of which is lodging. There are various types of lodging such as hotels, resorts, villas, guest houses, homestays to BnB. The part that will be described in detail is the hotel in this writing. Hotels are a necessary part of long-term and short-term tourism. They have facilities that are indispensable for long and short distance travel. The description of hotels by Nurnawati (2017) explains that in general hotels are service accommodation business entities for tourists with lodging services, food and beverage providers, and laundry services. Facilities can be used for guests staying at the hotel and hotel room tenants only.

Both tourists and business people often use hotels as a place to stay with food and drinks and other facilities. Even one to five-star hotels have different facilities and services. Service is an important element in receiving guests, determining employee performance, and can give an image to the hotel. A guest when arriving at the hotel will first be greeted by a receptionist. Front Office has an important role in providing the first experience to guests. Therefore, it is important to provide services according to optimal standards. Being a department that deals directly with guests or known as the first and the last impression of the guest. The Front Office Department has the first and last role in serving hotel guests. Like when a guest arrives, he will check-in and when the guest will leave the hotel, he will check-out. Based on Wachidyah's statement (2017), the Front Office Department is responsible for the reception and process of leaving the hotel to activities that concern the interests of guests. Starting from booking a room, welcoming guests, to during the range of stays at the hotel. Therefore, the Front Office Department plays an important role in hotel operations. All of these things intersect directly with employees in the Hotel Front Office Department. It is important to always maintain mental stability and improve the performance of Front Office employees.

Mental stability and employee performance can be done by optimizing human resources. Providing training and evaluation is essential in building an effective and efficient work environment. To build good performance in the Front Office Department, it is necessary to empower and deepen the quality of service to guests. Empowerment is carried out because of the unstable performance of Front Office employees which tends to affect guest assessments of the hotel and the need for a review of the sections in the Front Office Department. The existence of this problem, the need for the role of the Human Resources Department (HRD) in handling and providing empowerment to employees, especially the Front Office Department. HRD has a major role in the formation of a healthy, fair and comfortable work environment. Through the explanation of Sari (2019) which states that HRD is one of the departments responsible for managing human resources and ensuring the hotel gets the best employees. Furthermore, after ensuring that all employees join, it is necessary to maximize the best abilities so that they can serve or work optimally at the hotel.

The purpose of this study is to determine the role of the Front Office Department in a hotel that gets empowerment by HRD by focusing on performance and service assessment for guests. There are also problems that become the task of HRD to provide a work atmosphere that continues to increase and optimize employee performance. The results of this study, in the future, can provide quality improvement and development of hotels in empowering their employees.

METHOD

The research used a descriptive qualitative method. By developing sources of identification and observation based on field experience at the hotel. The preparation of the research was based on the following

1. Identification

Identification is the initial process to obtain information, and understand the problems of events that have occurred in the Front Office Department.

2. Observation

After identification, observations and analysis of existing problems will be carried out to provide real action.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Front Office Department is a mirror of the hotel's quality to guests at the hotel. In terms of readiness, alertness, and determination of employees to carry out their job functions and responsibilities. In accordance with Insani's statement (2020), it can determine the impression of good and bad to hotel guests before and when getting service to provide the experience of coming to the hotel.

Being an important role in giving impressions to guests, of course, makes employees in the Front Office Department need training and empowerment according to their duties. From some of the problems that usually arise in the work environment, there is a lack of stability and improvement in employee performance, the need for a review of the existing parts in the Front Office Department, and the existence of successive adaptations in a short period of time due to employee changes. To relieve and help run a good performance, HRD has a big role in helping the Front Office Department through employee empowerment. The concept of empowerment explained by Onsardi (2022), the word empowerment means to give ability or enable which means an effort to provide ability. Empowerment aims to provide understanding and training to individuals to be able to develop performance. From the problem of the lack of improving employee performance in the Front Office Department, condition identification, evaluation, and training can be carried out. Identification of conditions has the aim of knowing specifically what causes a decrease or not increasing employee performance. After knowing the specific causes of non-optimal employee performance such as unhealthy work environment, supervisor attitude, and communication. There is a need for departmental evaluation involving all sections in order to build harmonized performance. To build this, training is needed. Training focuses on the acquisition of skills, information, and attitudes that are expected to improve performance in the workplace as described by Gadi (2018).

Training is part of human resource empowerment which can be done by giving responsibilities related to departmental tasks. Unhealthy work environment can be overcome by conducting productivity and mental health training. Providing productivity training can provide an explanation of how an unhealthy work environment can adversely affect employee productivity and cause inner mental stress. Overcoming these problems, mental health training is needed that will provide its own touch. It will not specifically provide changes in the near future but can provide understanding and inner peace that the importance of paying attention to the work environment for optimal performance. In addition to providing training, the importance of re-evaluation to compare performance after and before training. Providing empowerment to employees, one of which is through training, can increase effectiveness and will indirectly optimize employee performance..

Socializing with colleagues is indispensable for maintaining a harmonious work environment. However, it does not rule out the possibility if there is an attitude or treatment of superiors that makes it uncomfortable. As is the case in communicating and acting. Sometimes there are ways of delivering superiors that are considered normal but hurt the feelings of their coworkers, treatment in action to how to give different appreciation so that the dynamics of work relationships arise. The existence of a supervisor's attitude that is considered unfavorable can cause feelings of discomfort and even loss of respect. This indicates that the work-life balance is not working well by not creating harmonious relationships between employees. To overcome this, the role of HRD is needed as a mediator and solution provider. The action that can be taken is to communicate with both parties concerned. Provide a space to be open to each other and be supervised

by HRD so that calmness in expressing opinions is always maintained. If there is still no bright spot in this problem because usually both parties have their own arguments not to be blamed or cornered. Then it is necessary for the role of HRD to go directly by observing and supervising all department superiors and employees in carrying out their respective duties regularly to be able to determine which party needs further empowerment.

The importance of closeness and harmonization with the boss in the long run. If the boss cannot provide a sense of security and comfort, the department employees will keep their distance and choose to resign from their positions. Changes in employee positions that occur in close proximity will cause adaptation between employees. This adjustment often causes differences in the capture of information and interpretation at the beginning of cooperation. The importance of quality human resources to create effective communication. Communication plays an important role in the movement of all employee performance because it is a medium used by individuals and social groups to facilitate interaction. To achieve a common goal requires clear and specific communication. Sometimes mistakes in communication occur but can be overcome with an understanding of communication. Communication is divided into personal and interpersonal. With communication problems between Front Office staff and guests, it is necessary to understand interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication will also provide good satisfaction to hotel guests. Interpersonal communication is communication carried out by one person sending a message and or a small group receiving it, with the impact and opportunity to get feedback according to Wulanda's statement (2024). Interpersonal communication is able to create a good relationship with guests to staff. Based on all the existing problems, it can be concluded that an HRD must have an objective role, a high sense of sensitivity to the work environment in the hotel, periodic training and mentoring to create a healthy work environment, the need to conduct performance evaluations, and an understanding of communication to avoid misinterpretation and action.

CONCLUSION

In this research and discussion, it focuses on the importance of optimizing human resources in the Front Office Department through empowerment. The conclusion that can be concluded is that:

1. The need to identify problems before concluding a solution. In the problems in this study, where the lack of employee performance is due to the poor working environment, the attitude of superiors who make it uncomfortable and safe, and the absence of good communication.
2. Provide training and opinion opportunities for Front Office Department employees to complain about the work environment and coworkers. Can increase productivity and add a sense of comfort & security in the workplace.
3. The importance of conducting evaluations after conducting training and open communication for employees. This evaluation strategy makes it easy when HRD needs a comparison of implementation results.
4. Good communication is built on the harmonization of the work environment. Therefore, the work environment and colleagues must be in the same goal and step to maximize effective and efficient communication

In maximizing training and evaluation as a form of employee empowerment by HRD, it is hoped that it will create employee performance optimization. Employee performance empowerment has many ways but this

research focuses on training and evaluation to increase values in the workplace, especially the Front Office Department.

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